

R 180038

JPRS-EPS-84-063

17 May 1984

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

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East Europe Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

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17 May 1984

EAST EUROPE REPORT

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

CPSU LECTURERS IN POLAND--In response to an invitation from the PZPR Central Committee and under the terms of the party-to-party cooperation program a group of lecturers from the CPSU Central Committee visited Poland from 17 to 26 April. The group was headed by N. Silkov, secretary of the Krasnoyarsk CPSU Oblast Committee, and also included I. Drozdetskiy, two-time Hero of Socialist Labor prizewinner and foreman at the Novokuznetskaya Mine, M. Sergeyev and R. Fyodorov, lecturers in the Propaganda Department of the CPSU Central Committee, and N. Smetanin, staff member of the USSR Planning Commission. The Soviet guests took part in numerous meetings in various social and occupational settings in Warsaw, Bielsko Biala, Katowice, Krakow, and Nowy Sacz provinces. The oral presentations made by the Soviet lecturers dealt with the implementation of the resolutions passed at the 26th Congress of the CPSU, ideological education tasks, and the work being done by the party in working class circles and among the intelligentsia in the Soviet Union. At the end of their visit the group of lecturers met with H. Bednarski, secretary of the PZPR Central Committee. This meeting was attended by V. Svirin, counselor at the Embassy of the USSR. [Text] [Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish 27 Apr 84 p 3]

CSO: 2600/953

MILITARY ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT DESCRIBED

East Berlin AR-ARMEERUNDSCHAU in German No 3, Mar 84 (signed to press 20 Jan 84) pp 60-65

[Article by Maj Ulrich Fink, photos by Horst Zuehlsdorf: "Military Moles"]

[Text] "On the way to the battalion they encountered deep holes, which were connected to each other by so many trenches, that it would probably be difficult even for heavy artillery fire to influence the combat capability of the regiment. The command posts lay in earth bunkers, which were covered by planks piled in layers on top of each other, the machine guns were mounted on round earth pedestals."

This is how Konstantin Simonov in "The Living and the Dead" describes the defense section of a regiment on the Dnieper during the first days of the Great Patriotic War. The words express great respect for those who built this post and moved hundreds of cubic meters of earth, because most earthwork-building was done with pick and shovel, often only with small field shovels.





But already in that war, and particularly during the postwar years, it turned out that the engineers could not have kept pace with the frantic military development without mechanical contrivances and special equipment. After all, the facilities and shelters they have to construct serve to protect the troops from the enemy's mass destruction weapons. Today the fighting units move much faster in the field of combat, and tactical situations can change at short notice. Thus, there is also less time for engineering work to fortify positions with respect to anticipated combat action. All of this caused the rapid development of the engineering units into modern, technical troops. Today they have the most varied vehicles and equipment for engineering reconnaissance and area surveying, machines and special technology, with which they can cross rivers and build bridges in a short time and can find and pump water. And, above all, they have powerful techniques for building and maintaining column routes and for building roads and shelters. For example, 800 man hours are needed to dig a 110-centimeter-deep and 1-kilometer-long

trench with shovels. When using a trencher, on the other hand, only two machine hours and about 100 hours for camouflaging and consolidation are needed. Such a special vehicle is the self-propelled Soviet BTM trencher. It has a 3.45-meter diameter blade wheel and is deployed as a field fortification machine for the purpose of digging trenches and communication trenches. Ten shovels with a capacity of 120 liters each convey the soil onto an ejector, from which it is deposited onto the edge of the trench. The trencher can excavate trenches up to 1.5 meters deep with an upper width of 0.9 to 1.1 meters and a bank width of 60 centimeters. Its operational speed, according to ground type and trench course, is 265 to 1,100 meters an hour. The AT-T crawler tractor serves as base vehicle for the BMT trencher, which has a total weight of 26.5 tons, and whose 325 hp engine makes an average speed of 18 to 24 kilometers/hour possible.

This AT-T fully tracked vehicle is also the basic vehicle for the MDK-2M Soviet trench digger, which is always deployed when it is necessary to excavate trenches, positions and shelters for combat technique. Also operated



by two men, it is capable of constructing 1.5 to 4.5-meter-deep shelter trenches, which are 3.5 meters wide down below and 4 meters above. It has a blade wheel operating as a front milling cutter, which is attached perpendicular to the driving direction, and a shovel ejection device, which throws the excavated soil to the side. The ground is thus dredged in layers. At the front of the vehicle is a grading blade. Lowering and raising the shield and switching the cutter and the ejection device from driving mode to operational mode and the reverse takes place hydraulically, and takes only 60 to 75 seconds.

For heavy excavation work the engineers usually use bulldozers, which are also employed for clearing and for shelter construction. An example of military machines of this type is the BAT-M roadbuilding machine pictured in our cover



photo. It was also built on the AT-T as base vehicle, on which the Soviet designers constructed a hydraulically operated grading device. Its two-sided blade has a work surface of 4.5 meters and is capable of operating in a grading position (sides 90° to the longitudinal axis) and planing position (sides 55° to the longitudinal axis). When building crossings, ramps, positions and shelters the BAT-M moves 100 to 450 cubic meters of earth per hour.

Auto dredges are often used for building shelters, because just excavating the 3 to 3.5-meter deep construction site for a dugout by hand requires about 150 man hours. In so doing about 120 cubic meters of earth must be excavated. To this must be added the time needed to shovel up the earth again over the construction of the dugout and to level it off.

An auto dredge such as the E 305 W universal shovel excavator with its two-man crew, needs only 3 hours for that. The excavator is built on the KrAZ 214 truck and is used as position construction machine with a high shovel and backhoe. In addition the engineers use it for piling up dams, placing earth on slopes, loading bulk cargo, building crossing over trenches and ravines as well as for clearing out trenches.

But in order not to let the number of models and the extent of tools that need to be carried grow to an inordinate volume, the designers of engineering technology are nowadays switching to designing multipurpose machinery, that can be used for as many functions as possible by exchanging the tools.

Such a device is the Czech universal engineering machine DOK-M, with which streets and roads can be built and maintained, obstacles removed, pits, trenches, positions and shelters cleared and bulk cargo loaded. It is a four-wheel vehicle, whose front and rear frame portions have been flexibly connected with each other. The turning radius of the machine, which has a maximum length of 10.53 meters, thereby becomes only 5.2 meters.

For work tools the DOK-M has a 2.6 cubic meter-capacity universal shovel, grading equipment and a truck winch. The two-part universal shovel consists of a part that resembles a planing blade and gripping clamps, which are hydraulically operated. The planing shield consists of a center part, two connected side parts and two wing portions that can be hooked onto the side portions. Stuck vehicles can be salvaged with the winch, whose lifting power amounts to 18 megapond.

The universal engineering machine is powered by a diesel-electric engine: its air-cooled 12-cylinder diesel engine produces 165 kilowatt at 1,800 revolutions/min. It drives a generator and several hydraulic pumps. The generator, in turn, feeds four electric traction motors, two of which always power one axle of the vehicle. Further, the generator serves as a source of power for welding and metalcutting work. Besides this modern Soviet and Czech military technology, the engineering units of the National People's Army and of the Border Troops of the GDR naturally also use vehicles and graders, just as they are used in the national economy.



But even the DOK-M, just as all other engineering machinery, does not operate all by itself. Combat service with this technology is connected with considerable physical and mental stress for their crews and service personnel, because within the effective range of enemy fire and in any weather conditions they often have to construct cover and shelters for hours, repair march routes and construct transportation roads. They have already shown in numerous troop exercises that they are capable of doing that.

11949
CSO: 2300/398

CHURCH FEDERATION CHAIRMAN COMMENTS ON CITIZENS' DISCONTENTS

Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 17 Apr 84 p 6

[Article datelined Frankfurt, 16 Apr 84: "Hempel: It Would Be Untruthful To Insinuate That the Officials in the State Secretariat Are Two-Faced"]

[Text] To this day we do not know for sure what induced the state leadership of the GDR to allow the emigration of so many people into the FRG and thus to trigger a real departure wave. The reasons which in many people in the GDR arouse the desire to leave, on the other hand, are evident. They also occupy the Protestant Church in the GDR. The chairman of the church federation in the GDR, the Saxon land bishop Hempel, at the last synod of the church federation in September 1983 in Potsdam-Hermannswerder took position in regard to this matter in the discussion (text according to epd [Protestant Press Service]):

"I do not have any simple answers. But I would like to be clear. And, as always, I may be wrong.

I believe that brother Semper, with his catchwords of a growing disappointment and embitterment of many citizens in our country, is describing something correctly. We see the following reasons for this:

1. In the socialist economy and also in our organization of scholarship, especially among the middle and lower cadres, a perceptible source for disappointment arises from the centralism of our society, amplified by the problems of the world economy. Some are raising questions about the meaning of their work. We hear about the stunted growth of the creative powers in our society.

We also hear that in the economy and in scholarship--among the middle and lower cadres--Christians are slighted to a greater extent than others. And that, after conflicts, they find it difficult to regain a normal reputation.

We hear of growing trends, especially in the sphere of our socialist schools, that the participation of Christian parents is repelled politely but firmly, even with respect to active membership in parents' organizations (from parents' advisory councils they have been excluded for a long time).

2. A further reason for the disappointment and embitterment of many citizens of our country, we perceive in the often ill-disposed and even humiliating forms of conduct of representatives of the state with citizens, but also by citizens of our society among each other. At the middle or local level, citizens, especially in connection with problems that have a political component, are often treated harshly or formally. Against such experiences of a lack of politeness, missing warmth and a formal mode of treatment, those of us in the administration of the church can do little. The affected citizens at the grassroots level know that we church administrators, as a rule, are receive better treatment. We are convinced that the experiences at the grassroots level constitute a decisive point for more general disappointments and embitterments. A new development of the culture of conduct with one another, including in connection with delicate and controversial subjects, is necessary.

The sceptical or distrustful basic attitude of many citizens vis-a-vis representatives of our republic also finds a reason in the 'pedagogically filtered' and 'optimistic' manner of informing adult citizens, which has been executed for decades ever since the existence of our republic. I remember that once, as a child, I came into the living room of my parents and was asked by my parents to leave at once because they--the parents--had to talk about something important. This appears to me like a parable for a large part of the information mode in our society. It is difficult to talk about weaknesses in the socialist society--about one's own and about the common weakness.

Talking about weaknesses of our society (in whose causes we, of course, sometimes have a part ourselves) is easily taken for agitation that is hostile to society. In the church we have learned (painfully by the way!) that talking about our own and common weaknesses of the church is necessary, does not lead to the destruction of the community, but in the end strengthens the community.

In this connection a word about youth. According to what I know, the majority of the young generation normally wants only two things. It wants the right to anger, and it wants the right to sincerity on the part of the elders. In other words: The majority of the youth wants to talk with us elders about their, about our, in short also about our common weakness. If we allow them to be angry, and make an effort to deal with them authentically, we will learn to know a magnificent new generation in the overwhelming part of the youth. Our society makes available too few places, at which anger may be discharged without punishment. As a result, the individual discharge of anger becomes improperly dramatic. But this can be changed.

The past actions of the state organs against the 'Swords into Plowshares-Symbols' (without wanting to bring out museum pieces in saying so) I regard now as before as a serious mistake with symbolic significance for many young people. We will overcome the consequences of this conflict, but we will need additional time to do so. To this day, young people, in talking to us, come back to this. They ask: "What did we do that was bad?"

In its history the church made many mistakes with symbolic content; that it forced Galileo to be silent became for centuries a symbol of blindness on the part of the church and inspired no less a person than Bertolt Brecht to create a fascinating play.

Clear Protest Is Part of the Interpretation of the Signs of the Times

3. A further reason for disappointment, indeed embitterment of many citizens, it seems to me, is the fact (---and this is now directed against the disappointed themselves---) that the demands of all of us for a high quality of life on the scale of the entire republic increased significantly. To begin with, we did not learn anything different from the socialist way of life and its moral standards. But that a fulfilled life is by no means a 'life in abundance', but includes renunciation and modesty, we slowly have to learn once again. It also applies to the church: The demands have risen; there is a decrease in the willingness to perform 'small services'. Within the scope of our possibility, we Christians want to help to regain the values of the simple life.

4. We have the impression that many citizens who want to leave our country do not really know 'the other world'. They see its advantages, but overlook the disadvantages. This results in illusions. For illusions all of us have to 'pay' with disappointment. I would like to express that I have frequently and clearly the discontent, the embitterment and the aggressiveness of the citizens of other countries against their government, in particular also the aggressiveness of young people in other countries, with a different social order.

5. I would like to underscore now that we, the people in leading positions in the church in the GDR, must continue our efforts to maintain open, sincere and fair contacts with the representatives of our government. For those of us in church administration, the state conversation partner normally is the state secretary for church questions with his staff or the councils of the bezirks. The working discussions with them are characterized by attentiveness and careful evaluation on the part of the state partners.

In many cases we are indebted to the representatives of the state organs for assistance, including cases in which our own weaknesses could have easily been used against us. To impute that the staff members in the state secretariate, for example, are two-faced would be untruthful. At times difficulties arise as a result of the fact that the representatives of the state whom we encounter have clearly limited mandates. What our discussions with the indicated representatives of our government are worth, we would come to realize if one day they should be discontinued.

6. I would now like to say a word about the peace testimony of Vancouver. The document on peace and justice, which has been transmitted to you, expressed that Christians should refuse to take part in a warlike conflict, in which weapons of mass destruction are used. The plenary session, however, also adopted (this is found in the document a few lines earlier): 'We ask the churches to urgently call upon their governments to recognize the right to refuse military service for reasons of conscience and to create the possibilities for a violence-free substitute.' According to my conviction, only the two Vancouver statements together are Christian. Our talking about the unjustifiability of a nuclear war, for the churches, includes at the same time the struggle to protect those people whom it concerns (who, in other words, are either punished or in the case of war are even executed and who, for example, do not sit among us in this synod) through the right to refuse military service. The church must not say the one, without doing the other.

7. In the worship service at the beginning of the synod, Professor Hertzsch spoke about the fact that we must interpret the signs of the times as a community. To interpret the signs of the times clearly, indeed unequivocally, includes the proclamation of hope, the hope for the saving and leading power of God and for the 'victory of the lamb'. The interpretation of the signs of the times includes sober analysis and clear protest; for us Christians, however, irrevocably also the proclamation of our religious faith. In Vancouver it was precisely the delegates from suffering churches--from South Africa, South Korea and Lebanon--which reminded us of this fact."

8970

CSO: 2300/414

PROBLEMS, FACTS ON NEW PERSONAL INCOME TAX LAWS DISCUSSED

Finance Ministry Interview

Budapest HETI VILAGGAZDASAG in Hungarian 24 Mar 84 p 12

[Interview with Benjamin Budai, chief of the department dealing with economic regulators in the Ministry of Finance, by Janos Marton, HETI VILAGGAZDASAG correspondent; date and place not specified]

[Text] Beginning on 1 January 1984, 900,000 Hungarian artisans, retailers, small businessmen and intellectuals will pay taxes on the basis of a new unified schedule--some will pay more and some less. In addition to the unification of the tax system, costs may be deducted from the tax base according to various schedules depending on the type of income--whether from intellectual work or artisan activity. Thus the tax system will be unified and not unified--this contradiction indicates how difficult it is to find the fair middle ground in a tax system which at the same time stimulates activity. Benjamin Budai, the chief of the department dealing with economic regulators in the Ministry of Finance, gave an interview regarding several problems in the further development of Hungarian taxation.

[Question] Why was it necessary to modify the tax schedules of almost 1 million Hungarian citizens?

[Budai] A great deal of criticism used to be directed at our tax system as a disincentive to achievement, even in the case of not very high incomes. For example, artisans who were at the top of the tax bracket were unwilling to take new orders toward the year's end. We wanted to change this with the modification of the schedules, and we also wanted to take into account the price increases since the schedules were established. Even considering the elimination of former tax exemptions, the new tax schedules reduce the tax burden by 5 to 10 percent on the average.

[Question] Is it conceivable that a general income tax will sometime be introduced in Hungary, that is, on the basis of income derived from work, and in fact tips would also have to be declared?



Key:

1. Income Taxation
2. Pressures and Loopholes

[Budai] The confrontation of efficiency and fairness is a regularly recurring subject of debate in Western societies as well, particularly when it is a matter of changing the tax burdens. The progressive income tax blurs income differences, but if the role of the sales tax for products and services is increased the differences may become greater. It is also true of Hungary that an income regulation would promote a fairer distribution if it could regulate incomes deriving from various sources at the end of the process according to a unified standard, and on the basis of a progressive schedule increasing proportionally with the rise in incomes. This is the personal income tax. As a first step we have introduced a new, general income tax law which evaluates incomes and taxes the same, independently of the source of activity. For the general introduction of the personal income tax it would be necessary, of course, among other things to develop the tax collection and control apparatus. We would have to change the deeply ingrained anti-tax attitude in our society. The general introduction of the personal income tax also assumes the development of the price and wage system.

[Question] Not only do the new income taxes create a new situation but also the reform of the sales tax. Are there experts who recommend that we, too, should introduce the value added tax?

[Budai] The financial experts agree that a greater share of the tax than is presently the case should be withdrawn at the end of the production process and that the many different kinds of sales tax schedules should be made more unified. It is a detailed and technical tax question whether we should realize this with a sales tax that appears in simple form with few schedules only in the consumption phase or with a more complicated value added tax that runs through the entire production sphere. From the viewpoint of its effect on price and the income ratios there is no essential difference between the two solutions. In making the decision we must also weigh the

fact that a large administration is necessary for collecting a value added tax, which would represent an additional expenditure of many billions of forints annually. But there is a need for reforming the sales tax because tax schedules and supports which vary and are differentiated by products create a rift in producer and consumer prices. For this reason the consumers are not sufficiently aware of the socially necessary costs, and the producers are not aware of the consumers' value judgments. Of course, this does not preclude that in harmony with our socio-political principles supports for certain products and services should be permanently maintained.

[Question] However, in a unified sales tax system smaller taxes would obviously be levied on technical and clothing items, while price support for foods and services would decline putting those with low earnings in a serious position.

[Budai] It is not unconditionally the lower level earners who enjoy the benefit of supports from prices. They can eat less meat, and make less use of services. And thus because of their lower consumption they receive less in the way of consumer price supports. A change in consumer prices will obviously have an effect on the living standards of certain sub-classes, and therefore in preparing to make the decision the expected social effects must be taken into account in a far-reaching way. This is also shown by practice. Changes in consumer prices are always preceded by basic political deliberation. In summary, it is my view that rational management could be promoted by a unified sales tax system in production, and socio-political viewpoints could be realized by expressly socio-political means and a unified personal income tax system. We must support people, not products and services with our social policy.

Facts and Figures

Budapest HETI VILAGGAZDASAG in Hungarian 24 Mar 84 p 13

[Article: "Domestic Tax Details"]

[Text] We are here presenting only an outline of the tax system for personal incomes valid as of 1 January; we shall return in the near future with more detailed information.

As we wrote in the 19 November 1983 issue of HETI VILAGGAZDASAG, some personal incomes in Hungary will be taxed in a different way. The new tax decree and the instructions for its execution are summarized in the title "general income tax" in this year's first issue of the PENZUGYI KOZLONY, but the tax system valid as of January is general only in that it uses the same tax schedule for the taxable income of artisans, retailers or intellectuals. But different schedules continue to be valid for the income of those who own household farms and have an annual income over 150,000 forints. At the same time income deriving from a wage-type and main occupation cooperative membership relation and falling in the pension payment category will continue to be fully tax free, as well as the countervalue of

work performed on the basis of a temporary work obligation, retraining support and all services provided on the basis of a pension and social security. (As Tivadar Rona, managing official in the Ministry of Finance, writes in the No 2 issue of this year's PENZUGYI SZEMLE, these can only be taxed if they are substantially greater than the ones at present. To put it plainly, if the state budget did not withdraw as a part of the enterprise tax a considerable part of the actual countervalue for work performed, as is the case today.) Moreover, prizes and awards for outstanding achievements will continue to be tax free--as in the case of the Kossuth prize, for example--and prizes, awards, study and social assistance proclaimed as tax free by the minister of finance. Tax free are the emoluments acquired outside their positions by selected office holders of the state's political and administrative organs, social organizations, the National Lawyers' Council and the lawyers' chambers, the directors and deputy directors of the legal and legal adviser work groups in their capacities outside of office. An income tax is not required on land rent, on cooperative share and special share dividends, and on the interest of membership loans, disabled veterans' welfare, and in general on state payments for disability. Tax free, moreover, is that portion of taxable income given to further public goals (for example, foundations), insurance awards, maintenance allotments awarded by courts, indemnities, inheritance income, and lodging and night lodging fees.

As emphasized by the Ministry of Finance, the new tax decree and the unified tax schedule system does not differentiate between incomes and does not classify activities (of course within the above-mentioned limits). But within this there are still some differences. In seeking to take into account the costs of work for income, the legislators of the decree--as up to now but more favorably in general--established by income differentiation what percent of the annual income forms the tax base. (See graph.)

Finally, the income tax is projected on income reduced by annual, total costs. In the case of discount taxes--and most intellectual products are taxed in this way--the tax is discounted from each mid-year payment using the appropriate tax base and schedule. Councils organized according to place of residence add up the accumulated taxable income reported to them at midyear and calculate the tax base and the tax. The difference in this tax which is discounted at midyear is returned or deducted subsequently if it exceeds 2,000 forints.

By virtue of the lower tax schedules and the tax bases which have been lowered to a greater extent than up to now, everyone will pay a smaller tax than last year. The tax base of the inventors and innovators has been reduced to the greatest extent, but the costs of programmers, choreographers, stage designers have also been recognized by the new law to a greater extent than before.

Prior to 1 January, a one-time income for a work done over a number of years--for example, for a statue, novel--was taxed in a different way from other income. But after this--or this is how the decree reads for the time being--these incomes will be dealt with in the same way as others, and thus the tax payment of a writer or sculptor may increase substantially.

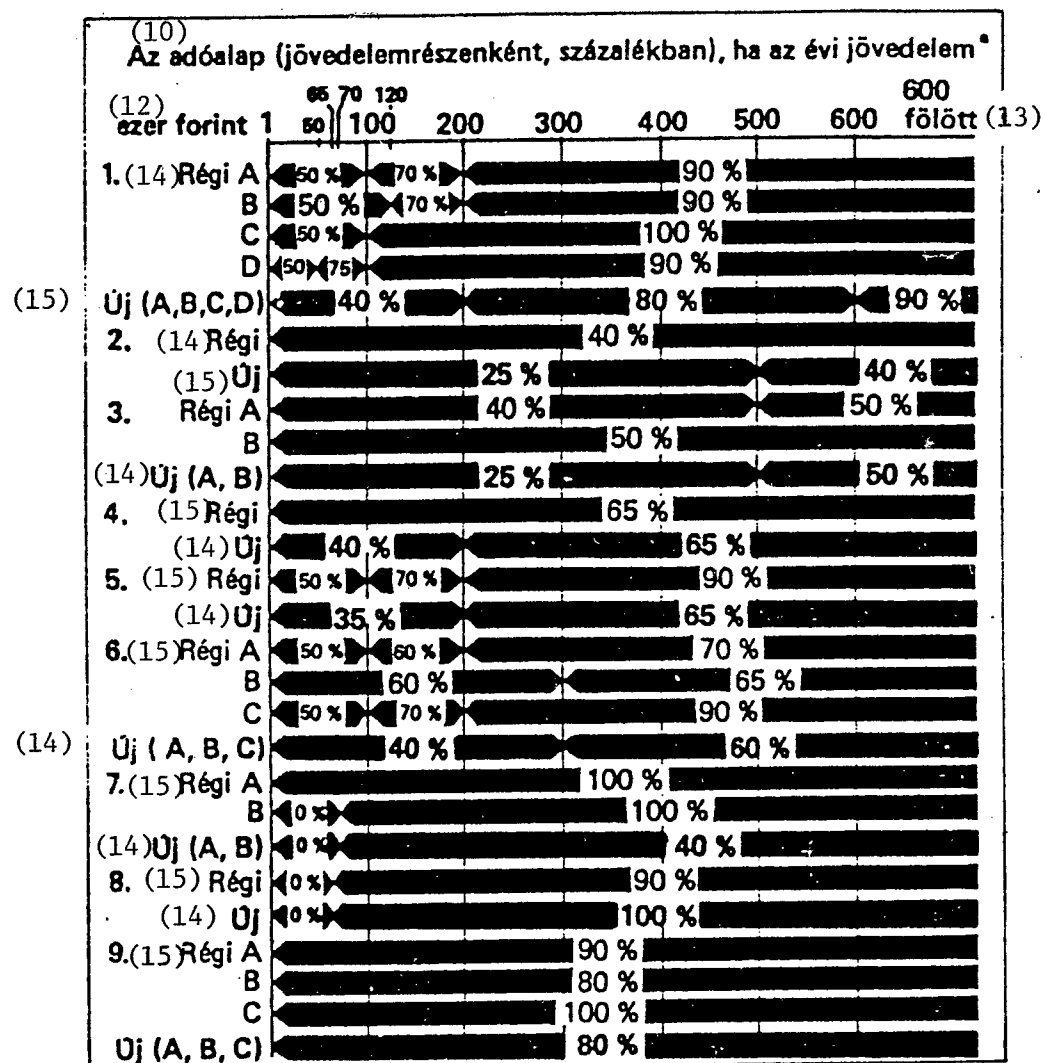
Presumably, the result of the debate conducted for weeks in ELET ES IRODALOM on the income tax of writers is that the director of the tax department in the Ministry of Finance, Vilmos Cserevny, stated in the MAGYAR HIRLAP supplement last Saturday: "I regard it as inconceivable that the regulation will be changed in this respect."

Table. Examples of Tax Rates for Artisans and Retailers Prior To and After 1 January

Taxable receipts (in forints)	Tax (in forints)	
	Old*	New
25,000	1,300	700
50,000	4,600	2,600
75,000	9,800	6,600
100,000	15,800	11,600
150,000	34,200	30,600
200,000	53,400	49,600
300,000	121,100	99,600
400,000	181,100	149,600
600,000	319,900	269,600
800,000	469,900	399,600

* Without population service rebate, which reduced the tax by 10 percent on a tax base of 100,000 forints. On 1 January this rebate was terminated.

Graph. Tax base for incomes deriving from several intellectual activities before and after 1 January 1984. The tax office always starts with income between 1 January and 31 December



(11) * A jövedelem forrása:

1. A: Writing (authorship, including newspaper writing), art translation, redrafting, editing of a collection, musical editing, musical composition, scoring, technical graphs published in a newspaper, expert translation and simultaneous interpretation at conferences. B: Taxable receipts of members of the Hungarian Writers' Federation and the literary department of the Art Fund. C: Literary work that requires cultural outlays--for example, crime film--and the receipts of the author (writer, art translator, rewriter, dramatizer) deriving from this. D: Composition of dance and other entertainment music and text writing.

2. Statues, painting, folk art creation.
3. A: Industrial art creation. B: Restoration, costume and ornament designing, scenario and industrial art designing.
4. Theatrical presentation, film operator, stuntman, disc jockey, and artistic activity.
5. Programming, choreography, movement planning.
6. A: Art photography. B: Graphics, technical graphics. C: Taxable incomes of photo-reporters operating as members of the Hungarian Journalists' Federation.
7. A: Invention, industrial model, patent. B: Innovation.
8. In-house prize for workers at research institutes, high-level institutions and other state organs.
9. Other intellectual activity. A: Critical reading of texts, editing, rough translating, expert work, teaching. B: Planning, handling and copying of manuscripts, corrections, music graphics. C: Second position, secondary occupation.
10. Tax base (income per 100%).
11. Income source.
12. 1000 forints.
13. Surplus.
14. Old.
15. New.

6691

CS0: 2500/294

DECLINE IN BIRTH RATE, NEGATIVE DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS NOTED

Budapest HETI VILAGGAZDASAG in Hungarian 31 Mar 84 pp 34-36

[Article by Andras B. Balint: "Decline in the Hungarian Way"]

[Text] In its plan report the KSH (Central Statistical Office) recently published the most important data of last year's demographic--population trend--statistics: the Hungarian population declined by 21,000 in 1983. From data in "Demographic Yearbook 1982," which was published shortly before the plan report, it is evident that the decline in population has been increasing steadily since 1981. Of course, the yearbook presents other essential features of our population trends, which are summarized in this article.

Statistics do not lie. By themselves they cannot. Nor can they discover the whole truth; but they can reveal to the reader some of the codes of the truth, the statistical facts selected for gathering. It is only a matter of imagination to find behind these the causes of the phenomena and their consequences. For the sake of simplicity we may call this sociological thinking.

The 1982 demographic yearbook which was published by the KSH several weeks ago stimulates most effectively our bent for imagination in the field of population policy. As we pour over data, tables, domestic and international comparisons, the mind is inevitably prompted to unravel the interconnections.

The first chapter of the book contains the development of the size of the population and its main trends. The table right at the beginning gives us sad and sensational information; in Hungary the population declined in 1981 and 1982. In the 1960's the population grew at an annually declining rate, and thus for a number of years everybody could count on an ensuing decline, at the most there were those who did not dare look the causes in the face and did not think out their economic and socio-political effects extending perhaps over a number of decades. In 1981 the population declined by only 1,867 persons as compared to the previous year, and in 1982 we had 10,759 fewer persons if we derive the increase or decline from the difference in live births and deaths. (It is evident from the plan report published since then by the KSH in 1983 that last year the population declined by 21,000. It would be good to know how much of this was the result of decisions to

emigrate to some other country. It is apparent, however, from the explanatory (?) notes published in the statistical yearbook that such figures have not been published since 1971.

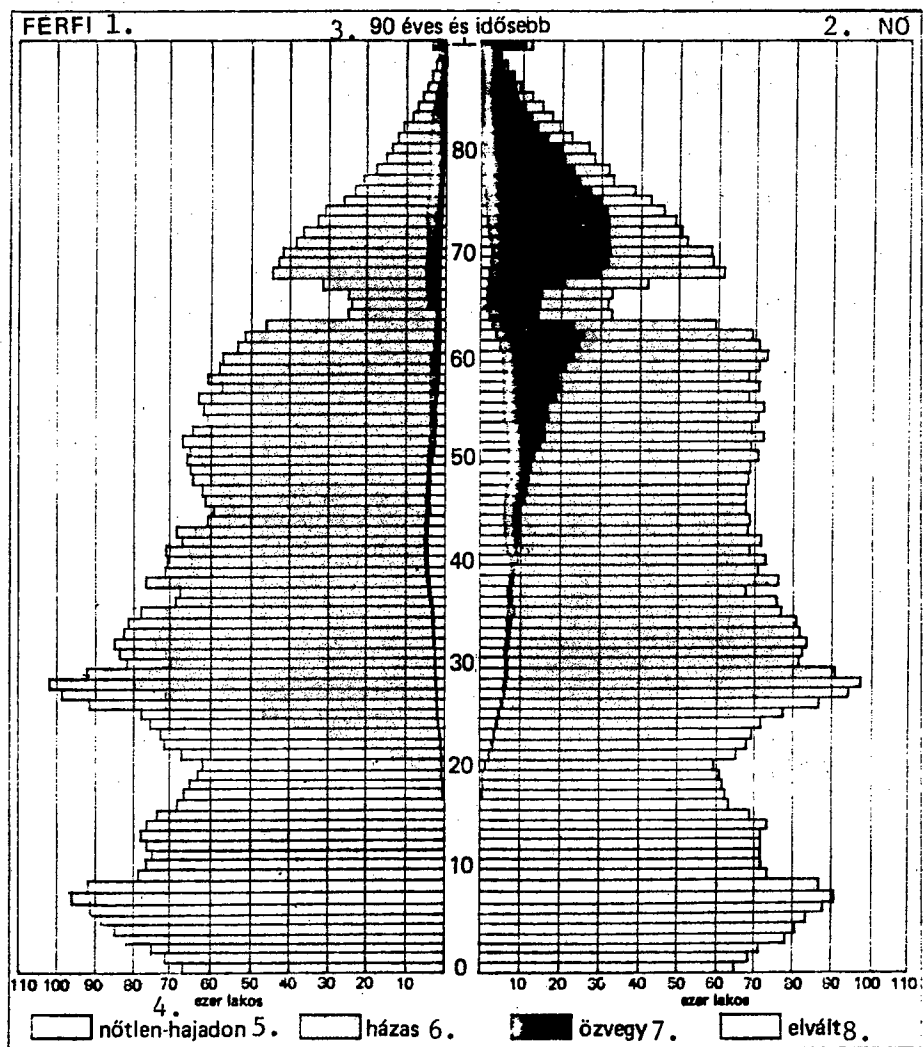
On the final pages of the book, among the international data, we learn where the Hungarian natural increase stands in European and world rankings. We occupy the second place from the bottom on our old continent. Projected on 1,000 inhabitants, the annual increase is 1.0; it is even weaker in the FRG--1.5 per thousand, and the rate in Denmark is a somewhat more favorable 0.5 per thousand. In other European countries, the size of the population is increasing--in some places slowly and in others strongly, and it is also growing in the Asian, American and Oceanic states mentioned for comparison in the book.

Rudolf Andorka wrote a decade and a half ago that "the activity of the population as expressed via the birth ratio is determined by the social atmosphere in respect to the number of children." This social atmosphere depends, on one hand, on recent developments and the present situation and may therefore fluctuate strongly over the short run; and on the other hand, it is organically related to the culture of the society in question, the value system, and therefore tends to be quite stable. Since the end of the 1950's in Hungary, stability has been characteristic: stability in decline. The Hungarian population policy which was raised to a government program has not fulfilled its otherwise justified minimal goal--the maintaining of the reproduction level or the prevention of a further decline in the growth rate of the population. The causes for the failure are to be sought in the operational problems of our society, among other things, in single status housekeeping, moral and material depreciation in the value of social subsidies--primarily child care assistance--in public education which can hardly be called conceptual and consistent, and in the relaxing of the value system. And naturally, there is an emotional and consciousness phase: the uncertain picture of the future which may have developed in response to the increasingly difficult economic situation, the stagnation of living standards--in fact the pauperization of certain sub-classes--and the threatening danger of war.

Of the 10,700,155 Hungarians living on 1 January 1983, 51.6 percent were women and 48.4 percent were men. In every year since 1880 somewhat more males were born than females, but despite this in the 40 to 59 year-old age group there are at present 125,000 more females than males and in the over-60 year-old age group 350,000 more females than males. Of course, the ratio of single females is also larger: while among the male population 3.7 percent are widowed and 4.5 percent are divorced, the same ratios among females are 17 percent and 6.3 percent, respectively.

[see graph, next page]

Size of the Hungarian Population According to Sex, Age and Family Status,
1 January 1983



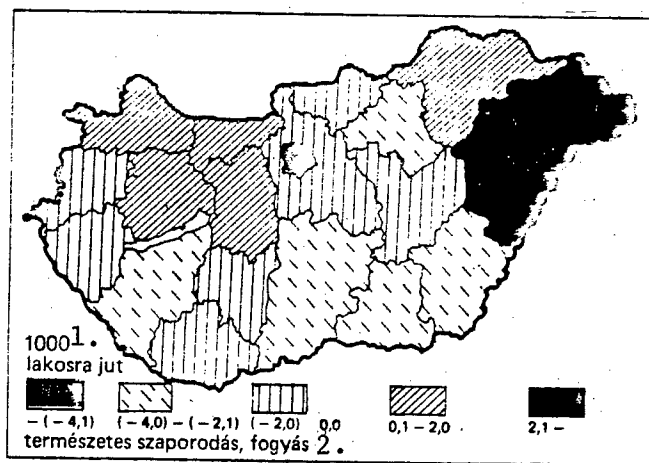
Key:

1. Male
2. Female
3. Ninety years old and over
4. per one thousand inhabitants
5. unmarried
6. married
7. widowed
8. divorced

The area distribution of the population is important both from the viewpoint of manpower management and social relations. It has changed somewhat in the past two decades, on one hand because a number of communities (villages) have been raised to the rank of cities. Our most populous settlement is Budapest, where there are 2,064,307 permanent inhabitants. Among the megyes Pest is in the lead with 983,000 persons, followed by Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (804,000) and Szabolcs-Szatmar (588,000) and Hajdu-Bihar (559,000). Our smallest megyes are Tolna and Vas with 268,000 and 284,000 inhabitants, respectively. Not counting Budapest, there are still considerably more people living in villages; on 1 January 1983, 35.1 percent of the population lived in cities and 45.6 percent in communities (villages).

The development in the number of marriages and divorces is also a neuralgic point in our demographics. In 1982, 75,500 Hungarians were married, almost 5,000 fewer than in 1980 and 22,000 fewer than 10 years ago. The class or sub-class of those marrying corresponds by and large to the ratios in the population. This is not true of the ratios in respect to nationality and native language. According to various estimates there are almost one-half million nationality citizens living in Hungary (5 percent of the population) but 73,967 (98 percent) of the couples who were married declared themselves to be Hungarians; outside of these most indicated Gypsy, German and Slovak as their native language but the ratios lagged far behind their ratio in the population as a whole.

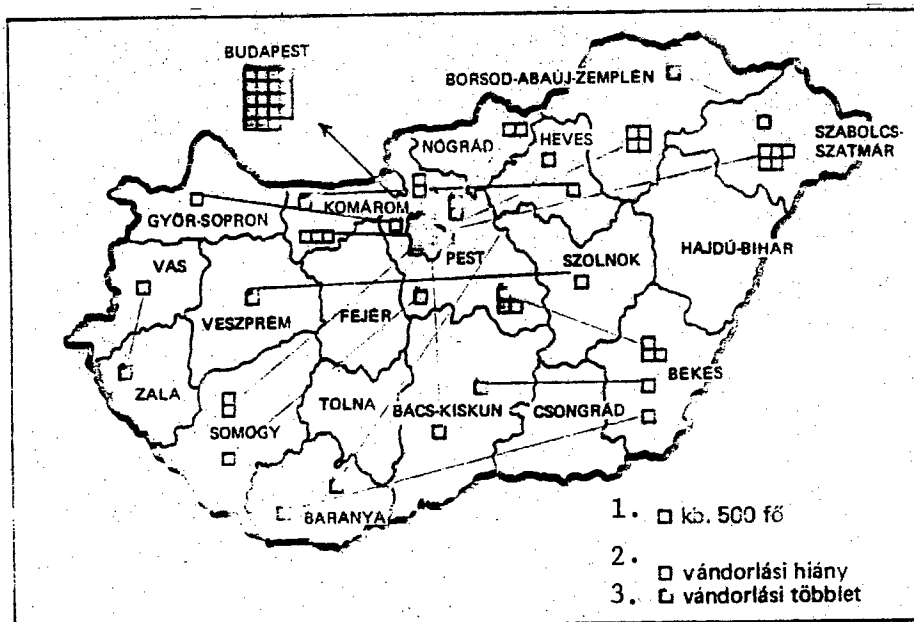
The Ratio of Natural Increase or Decrease by Megye, in 1982



Key:

1. per one thousand inhabitants
2. natural increase, decrease

Immigrants and Emigrants with Permanent Registration, in 1982



Key:

1. about 500 persons
2. migration plus
3. migration minus

The number of divorces, since this legal institution has existed, was the highest in 1982: 28,857. This is 6,000 more than in 1970 and 12,000 more than in 1960. The second to fourth years of cohabitation are the most critical from the viewpoint of the duration of the marriage, although a surprisingly large number decide on separation even after 10 to 14 years of marriage, and 747 marriages lasted less than 1 year in 1982, or 2.6 percent of the marriages in that year. The biggest problem is that among 70.6 percent of the divorced there was one or more child, mostly children of the two divorced parents. Of the 28,500 separated couples, 26,995 had minor children under the age of 18 years. There were twice as many divorces in cities as in villages. This indicates that ties are more endurable in the provinces, or religious and moral considerations are deeper and perhaps the restraining effect of the community is greater.

There are various ideas about the increase in divorce. As an indication, we shall mention only two extreme views: one which regards the traditional family as a whole as inviable and must be replaced by something else, and the other seeks to ascribe the crisis in marriage to economic causes in every way. As for myself, I regard it as necessary to take into account, in addition to materialistic factors, a socio-ethical cause (as with the decline in natural increase), namely, the problems in the value system. In any event with the 20th century the family has ceased to function as a basically economic unit, and other bases of unity have not as yet developed or are not as yet

sufficiently strong. The role of the mother is unclear: her engagement in permanent work is a way to equality, but now the role she fulfills in the house is unsolved when she is incapable of satisfying at one and the same time her calling and the task of holding the family together, bearing and educating children. Undoubtedly housing conditions play a role in the rise in divorce, conflicts arising from prolonged living together in one house with parents, unjustifiable from the economic-production point of view and combined with career starting difficulties. In 1982, a total of 134,579 children were born, of these 133,559 were live birth. The number of abortions dropped from 180,000-200,000 in the 1960's--obviously largely because of the spread of various contraceptives--to 96,000; the number of induced abortions was 79,000 and the number of spontaneous abortions 17,000.

The number of deaths in 1982 was 144,000, at an average age of 68 years (65 for men and somewhat above 71 for women). According to popular belief, men are more prone to die than women in the ages between 40 and 50 years. In analyzing the demographic tables it is evident that the mortality rate of the male sex is higher from the threshold of adulthood at the age of 18 years all the way to age 60. Among both sexes deaths occur most frequently in the first half of the year--May, January and March in that order--and less frequently in September and August. Among the causes of death, of course, are illnesses and handicaps already present at birth or prior to birth: 132,000 died as a result of these causes. In the year under discussion there were 1,648 deaths due to automobile accidents and 5,670 deaths due to other fatal accidents; 304 were victims of homicide or injuries deliberately inflicted by others, while there were 4,659 suicides. (In retrospect, there were 2,684 "successful" suicides in 1938 and 2,493 in 1960.)

The development of internal migration movements are important from an economic-political point of view. Of those who chose a new, permanent place of residence--a total of 209,635 persons--11 percent went to Budapest, 38 percent to other cities, and 51 percent to the communities (villages). A total of 22,977 moved to Budapest, but from there 13,577 moved elsewhere. In the provinces the most common "receiving places" were Pest, Borsod and Baranya megyes, although they are already well filled. The migration difference was positive in Budapest and in Borsod, Győr-Sopron, Pest and Tolna megyes whereas in other megyes the number of departees was greater than the number of settlers. The negative difference was greatest in Szabolcs-Szatmar with a loss of 3,609 persons. Most of the migrants were young--20 to 30 years of age, and there were one and one-half times as many males as females. Among the migrants there were twice as many members of the working class (68,101) as of the intellectual class (34,289) and almost eight times more than members of the cooperative peasantry (8,909).

[See table, next page]

Internal Migration in 1982 According to Several Major Goals of Migration*

A vándorlás célja 1.	Odavándorlás 2.				Elvándorlás 5.			
	3. állandó bejelentővel		4. ideiglenes bejelentővel		3. állandó bejelentővel		4. ideiglenes bejelentővel	
	5. község-be	6. város-ba	5. község-be	6. város-ba	5. község-be	6. város-ba	5. község-be	6. város-ba
Munkavégzés 7.	35 098	29 089	25 291	38 070	47 065	21 726	70 103	32 266
Tanulás 8.	673	760	6 610	34 362	1 025	651	31 820	17 578
Házasságkötés 9.	12 726	6 533	1 753	1 041	15 480	4 379	1 622	1 096
10. Eltartókkal együtt költözés	29 983	22 134	5 857	4 808	37 374	17 107	6 057	4 006
11. Összesen	106 806	79 852	52 366	88 447	134 347	61 711	123 280	64 373

* A statisztika megkülönböztet még gyógykezelést, látogatást, üdülést, családi okot és ideiglenes lakásból állandóra bejelentkezést.

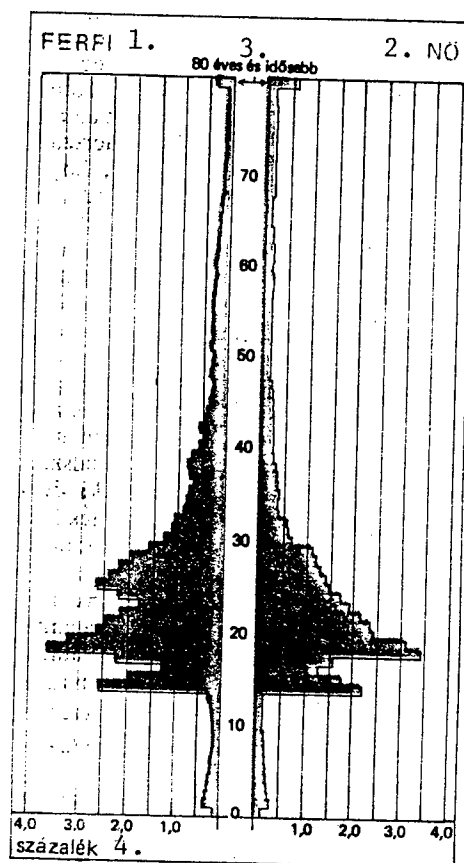
Key:

1. Goal of migration
2. Emigration
3. with permanent registration
4. with temporary registration
5. to a community (village)
6. to a city
7. Work
8. Studies
9. Marriage
10. Migration together with supporter
11. Total
12. In addition, the statistics distinguish among medical treatment, visits, recreation, family reasons and moving from temporary to permanent home.

Therefore, the population of Budapest continued to increase although the capability of the capital city to receive more migrants is already reaching its end. But that this number moves every year and that even more are intending to move to Budapest and other cities (primarily from the villages) is shown by the fact that the infrastructure, work possibilities, commercial, social and cultural facilities of the larger settlements still represent a great drawing power, that is, there has been only a minimal decline in the difference between the living standards attainable in the village and the city. (A considerable share of those leaving villages go to villages.) It appears natural that most of the migrants are workers because as a consequence of the industrial settlement practice, as it developed, they must follow demand, and it is only now and then that an important investment is established and development carried out where an appropriate body of workers--at the same time with qualifications appropriate to the planning--is already available.

[See graph, next page]

Migration and Return with Temporary Registration in 1982



Key:

1. Male
2. Female
3. 80 years old and over
4. Percent

We could continue to cite the noteworthy data for 447 pages. This is how long the "Demographic Yearbook 1982" is, and we cannot believe that a single table in the book is without interest, superfluous or useless. Despite some of the less than cheerful facts, it is important that the indexes be available primarily to experts, but actually to all interested persons in order that we may find a way--as we pointed out in the introduction--to draw various kinds of sociological conclusions and in fact to make certain analytical forecasts.

The KSH has done its job--the rest is up to others.

6691

CSO: 2500/308

BUDAPEST TO HOST 1986 INTERNATIONAL PEN CLUB CONFERENCE

Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 18 Mar 84 p 7

[Interview with Alexandre Blokh, first secretary of the International PEN Club, by Istvan Rudnyánsky: "In the Interest of Cultural Cooperation Between Countries"]

[Text] Alexandre Blokh, the secretary-general of the international society of PEN clubs, visited Hungary for the first time; thus arose spontaneously our first question.

[Question] What impressions have you acquired here?

[Answer] Excellent. The hospitable Hungarian writers captivated us by their kindness, and so did the members of PEN and everyone whom I met. I was received by politicians. I visited theaters, cultural establishments and societies, farmers co-ops, museums and factories. I visited Szentendre, Visegrad. I saw exhibits, I saw the paintings returned to the Fine Arts Museum, I saw the film of the rock opera Istvan, the King; I met with many excellent artists. I have met an enchantingly talented people in this country. I was surprised by the originality of the Hungarians, which demonstrates itself in various aspects of life. I arrived at a lucky time, when people were commemorating March 15; I was able to participate in the celebration organized in front of the National Museum, I was able to see how the progressive historical traditions continue and what effect they have. The nurturing of tradition is sparkling with renewal, and efforts to contemporize it are paired with fresh initiatives.

[Question] How do you value the activity of PEN clubs and the Hungarian PEN club in promoting international understanding?

[Answer] What concerns the more than 6-decade activity of International PEN, of which I have been a secretary-general for 3 years, it has 84 membership organizations in 55 countries. Every continent has a PEN movement, but the effectiveness is quite uneven. For instance, unfortunately, only three PEN organizations are active in all of Africa; this is our weakest point. However, we do not form our relations according to countries, but rather, according to linguistic areas. For instance, those Chinese writers who write in English participate in the activities of the English writers. The

official language of PEN is English and French, but during our meetings we use other languages as well. I myself speak five languages. The important thing is that regardless of the language used by PEN writers, the common thing should always be good understanding, and that we should work for mutual respect between peoples and countries. Their role is also so important because PEN is the only association of international writers that strives for universality.

As for the Hungarian PEN club, I might say that small Hungary has great literature, and that the Hungarian PEN is a "great power" in our organization. The Hungarian PEN is one of our best, most active and most effective organizations. Its role--with its openness, and wide spectrum of understanding, its attitude toward helping rapprochement and cooperation is of outstanding importance. The recognition of this was also reflected by the fact that its president Ivan Boldizsar was elected vice president of International PEN Society.

The Hungarian PEN has an especially important role in assisting with translations of writings. This is an especially important question, because PEN considers it as its duty to introduce literature of the so-called small nations. Translation has a significant role in the dissemination of literatures of "small languages" and making them known. The Hungarian PEN initiatives of this nature and achievements of work done up to now have created attention and recognition.

[Question] How is the International PEN preparing for the Cultural Forum to be held in Hungary, which will be attended by the 35 state representatives, who participated in the Helsinki conference?

[Answer] During my Budapest negotiations, I was given the honor of being received also by Bela Kopeczi, minister of education. I told him that, according to the International PEN, cultural cooperation is not only a matter for states and state representatives, but first of all that of artists: poets, writers. With their help the directors of the cultural policy and its organizers can better perform their official work. I reminded him that the members of PEN, and thus the writers of the Hungarian PEN promote cultural cooperation: they want to be useful to this cause and profit from those recommendations and opportunities which will hopefully be worked out and discovered at the Budapest forum. The minister, as a Hungarian government representative hosting the forum, warmly welcomed the International PEN initiatives and expressed his opinion that although state representatives are participating in the forum, the International PEN can have an important role in the preparations as well as in implementing the proposals. I announced that the International PEN will gladly contribute to advancing international cultural cooperation both during the preparation of the cultural forum and the time following it. We would like to help in realization of suggestions hopefully offered in a positive spirit. With this idea we are convening the meeting of International PEN of 1986. I hope that Budapest can host this international gathering of writers, as well as the forum.

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CSO: 2500/276

BRIEFS

KUBIAK ON INTELLIGENTSIA ROLE--The problems and the role of the intelligentsia in Poland today were the topic of a meeting held on 9 April between professor Hieronim Kubiak, member of the PZPR Central Committee Politburo, and members of basic party organizations and representatives of institutions of higher learning in the Tricities area. During the discussion period at this meeting statements were made to the effect that a large percentage of the Polish intelligentsia is laboring under various myths and illusions. Blunt questions were asked as to the reasons why the intelligentsia, considering its level of education and knowledge, is not doing as much as it should to advance the cause of rationalism in terms of the Polish public's way of thinking and looking at the world? A common effort was made to determine where the intelligentsia stands in Poland today, that is, what is the standing of that group of people who have earned university degrees, a group which is now larger than it has ever been before in Polish history. During the meeting the view was also expressed that this social group is not thoroughly living up to its responsibilities in all aspects of our social life, especially so in our severely troubled industrial sector. One of the end results of all this is that our manufactured goods are still not as competitive as they should be in terms of quality and engineering design features. [Text]
[Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish 10 Apr 84 p 2]

CSO: 2600/954

CURRENT ROLES OF SOCIALIST, PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Bucharest ERA SOCIALISTA in Romanian No 7, 10 Apr 84 pp 5-8

/Article by Univ Prof Dr Aurel Negucioiu: "Socialist Ownership in the Present Stage of Romanian Society's Development"/

/Text/ The institution of socialist ownership throughout the national economy has unquestionably been one of the essentials that has enabled the Romanian people to gain major successes in all activities in the bright years since the national liberation. Indeed the nationalization of the main production means in June 1948 and the cooperativization of agriculture concluded in 1962, as well as the massive development of the technical-material base of the new social order throughout the years of socialist construction and especially since the Ninth Party Congress, provided the essential support upon which the whole nation's economic, social and cultural activities and the entire Romanian people's welfare thrived and flourished.

Of course the problems of creating and expanding socialist ownership involve various theoretical and practical considerations and take different forms in different countries progressing on the path of the new society, depending on many internal and external factors and the particular historical conditions under which that process begins and progresses. That is why they intrigue economists, sociologists, political scientists, philosophers et al. as well as politicians and planners and bring about changes and confrontations of ideas about the best ways and means of developing public ownership and demonstrating its superiority more and more strikingly.

In the last few years the national and international bibliography of Marxist works on ownership relations on various levels of social development in general and on socialist ownership in particular has been considerably enriched in both quantity and quality. From the quantitative standpoint, there are more studies of various aspects of ownership relations and more authors equipped with scientific tools of investigation who have discussed the forms of ownership. The bibliography shows a more comprehensive treatment of a number of points about the research methodology, formation of socialist ownership relations, the unity and interaction of the forms of socialist ownership, the laws governing their evolution and other questions.

Meanwhile noteworthy progress was made in the methodological-theoretical treatment of the problems of ownership relations, in enhancing scientific knowledge of the content and nature of socialist ownership and its operational economic mechanism, and in revealing its place and role in socialist reproduction.

The CPR's thinking and conception, developed with Nicolae Ceausescu's telling contribution, have a place apart in the fund of scientific theory concerning socialist ownership. As we know, the main problems of the nature of socialist ownership of the production means, of the dialectical unity and interaction of the forms of that ownership, and of their role in the nation's socioeconomic development, in raising the material and cultural living standard of all members of Romanian society, and in the further improvement and enrichment of the entire people's quality of life are subjected to a thorough theoretical-methodological and practically applicable study in the theoretical works of the party and its secretary general. The Romanian party and state leader's works thoroughly and comprehensively demonstrate the objective necessity of regular growth and development of socialist ownership and enrichment of its content while the fully developed socialist society is being built, the problems of the socialist state's role in expansion of the entire people's socialist ownership, those of cooperative ownership, those of private ownership and its bearing on socialist ownership of the production means, and the relationships arising from workers' contribution of social shares to the economic units' development funds.

The CPR's conception of the nature and role of socialist ownership and the ways of developing it, like its whole conception of construction of the new order, was formed in the process of national and universal scientific knowledge and in the course of national and international experience in building the new society. It correlates dialectically and incorporates in its content the fundamental truths discovered by the classics of Marxist political economics and confirmed by historical-economic experience as well as the subsequent advances of Marxist thought, critically interpreted by means of the dialectical method. At the same time the essential point is that the party's conception of socialist ownership was based, in its scope, content, structure and value, both (and primarily) upon comprehensive and in-depth investigation of Romania's particular conditions with constant study, dialectical interpretation and theoretical generalization of Romania's own experience with construction and development of the new society, and upon knowledge of practical experience in international socialism. Accordingly, economic thought, the economic facts and the particular relations of socialist ownership were the raw material of which the CPR's conception of socialist ownership was made, by a whole process of dialectical treatment, and the Romanian national economy is the main laboratory in which this conception is checked and enriched.

So formed and enriched, the party's conception of socialist ownership is a basic segment of its economic thought. Like all its economic thought, it is characterized by an accurate and increasingly comprehensive reflection of the actual, specific relations of socialist ownership in Romania, by an extensive epistemological, theoretical-methodological and ideological emphasis, by a great deal of creativeness and originality, and by an exceptional applied value. An example of applied dialectical logic in its origin and content, this conception is always open to comparison with experience, verification and reverification, refinement, expansion of its field of investigation, amplification and enrichment, from the standpoints both of its function of increasingly accurate and complete reflection

of socialist ownership relations, and of the most accurate possible forecasting of the main evolutionary trends.

As we know it was maintained for a long time that one of the essential features that distinguish the entire people's socialist ownership from communist ownership is that the former takes the form of state ownership as an objective necessity. The CPR general secretary demonstrated that this interpretation is in error. As he said, "In view of the social quality of ownership, work and distribution, we must make some clarifications in the concepts of ownership in order to correlate them more fully with the facts of Romanian socialist society. I think it is wrong to identify social ownership, or the entire people's ownership, with state ownership. The state is not and should not be an owner in the legal sense of the word. Social ownership belongs to the entire people. The state is only an instrument in the hands of the working class, of the workers regardless of nationality, and of the entire people for the organized achievement of socioeconomic development."

These views bring out, first of all, the following truths:

1. In socialism social ownership belongs to the people. It is the entire people's ownership. The object of this form of ownership is possessed by society as a whole, by the entire people, and consequently belongs to all members of society equally. They are in the same position and must display the same attitude toward the object of the entire people's ownership. Socialism dies away with economic inequality in possession of the production means.
2. The people's social ownership is not the state's ownership and does not take the form of state ownership. The Romanian state is not and should not be an owner. The subjects of socialist social ownership are all society and consequently the people, the production collectives and the members of socialist society. Every individual's capacity as a collective owner and consequently a coowner of the production means requires his membership in the respective collective as an objective necessity and depends upon that membership. No individual can consider the national wealth or the production collective's property his unless and to the extent that he is a member of the respective collective.
3. The Romanian socialist state, as a state of revolutionary democracy, is an instrument in the hands of the working class and the entire Romanian people. As a representative of society it is the general administrator of the entire people's property. In this capacity it is the state's duty to exercise control and to see that the entire people's property is better managed, not wasted, and further developed and that all units consistently implement self-management, self-administration and further growth of economic effectiveness as well as possible.

This interpretation of the nature of the entire people's socialist ownership and the role of the socialist state also brought about an improvement in the legislation for entrusting the socialist units' property to the workers collectives and thereby strengthening their prerogatives and responsibilities as owners, producers, participants in management, and beneficiaries. To this end Romania instituted the pledge-contract, which is concluded between the state as general administrator of the entire people's property, represented by ministries and central or local organs under which the enterprises and centrals operate, and the workers

collectives in those units, and also between the state, represented by authorization of the State Council by the prime minister, and ministries, central organs or the executive committees of the county and Bucharest municipal people's councils.

These new regulations are necessitated by the socioeconomic nature of the entire people's ownership of the production means and the autonomous operation and use of its objects. By virtue of the pledge-contract between the state and the workers collectives in the economic units (enterprises and centrals) these units' property, as an integral part of the entire people's property, is entrusted to the working personnel for the direct exercise of the prerogatives and responsibilities, flowing from the workers' new status, for its maintenance, most efficient use, and further growth and development.

The individual pledge, signed by every worker when he is hired by a socialist unit, was instituted for the same purpose. It covers his obligations under the pledge-contract for exemplary performance of the production tasks, observance of the standards of technology and labor discipline, more productive use of machinery and equipment and all fixed assets, efficient use of raw materials, materials, fuels and energy, and improvement of product quality.

These regulations solve major problems of operation, production, reproduction and use of the object of socialist ownership and those of production and reproduction of socialist ownership relations.

Of course the objects of ownership are and should be operated and used in accordance with their useful properties and their characteristics as use values in the processes of production properly speaking and of nonproductive consumption. The objects of ownership can be operated productively only by means of live labor, that is by uniting the labor force and the production means. Consequently the actual implementation of socialist ownership objectively creates the necessity of generalizing the labor, the economic necessity for every fit member of society to do a useful and efficient job for himself and society, the economic possibility of doing such a job, and the opportunity to implement that possibility. Legally these points are reflected in the institutionalized right and general obligation to work and in the guaranteed fulfillment of the obligation and exercise of the right to work, and they are summed up in the status of the members of Romanian society as united socialist producers.

But the possibility is not implemented automatically or mechanically. It requires the most thorough training of the labor force to meet the highest standards of socioeconomic progress and the most efficient operation and exploitation of socialist ownership, planned distribution of the labor force and production means among the components of the system of social division of labor, and direct and especially indirect, de jure and de facto, and increasingly competent, responsible and committed participation of the members of society in economic management of the object of ownership and in the management, organization and implementation of the process of creating, expanding and developing socialist ownership.

Thanks to the constant efforts of the party and its secretary general, Romania is contributing its own theory and practice of workers self-management and self-administration to the theoretical and practical treasury of construction of the

new order. All members of society must participate in the act of managing the operation and exploitation of socialist ownership of the production means as an attribute of their new status because of the nature of that form of ownership. Such effective and increasingly competent and responsible participation enhances the socialist content of that ownership, lends a particular character to the method of uniting the labor force with the production means, eliminates more and more of the remnants of people's subordination to the division of labor and the means of labor, and enhances the freedom and creative content of the work.

Use of the production means is no longer and should not be confined to placing them in operation. The members of society are making a real and more and more complete use of the production means and are no longer subordinated to them. The direct production process has ceased to be mere consumption of physical and intellectual energy and has become a school of all-around development, a process of transformation and self-fulfillment of the personality. Every producer's occupation is being increasingly enriched with the ability to innovate, invent and rationalize, primarily in his own field of course, and also with the knowledge and skills required by effective participation in self-administration and workers self-management. The producer is interested in the normal progress of the ownership "movement" in all its stages and phases. But more than that, socialist ownership, created and developed by the labor of the united socialist producers, is intended by its nature to meet their needs more and more completely. They benefit by the production means and the products made by means of them, by the fruits of their own collective labor, and by the advantages of their use, so that their status is supplemented with the new essential attribute of beneficiary of the fruits of their common labor.

Socialist ownership relations characterize the entire system of socialist economic relations. Their content determines the socioeconomic content of all social relations of production and reproduction. They unify all the forms of socialist social production and the phases of the uniform process of reproduction. The social form of ownership of the production means determines the forms of production and reproduction, and it is their most distinctive characteristic. The increasingly intensive expanded reproduction of the object of socialist ownership and of socialist ownership relations, the greatest possible growth and use of the national wealth, and the increasingly efficient economic implementation of socialist ownership lend purpose and content to the new economic-financial mechanism and to the economic policy of improving it, because ownership that is not economically implemented loses any purpose and ultimately any content.

Because of its indivisible nature, the entire people's socialist ownership has converted the Romanian economy into a uniform socialist organism, into a uniform economic complex more and more closely welded in all its articulations. It is the economic basis of the unity and cohesion of all Romanian society, and it also lends the economic relations among the members of society a character of collaboration and mutual aid.

As Nicolae Ceausescu demonstrated, socialist ownership of the production means "puts the entire national potential to work for the people." It "permits a coordinated and effective effort toward society's prosperity" and "makes it possible to regulate the economic processes according to the objective necessities of society." It emphasizes the necessity of knowledge and purposeful use of the

social laws and the necessity of rational organization of socioeconomic activity in accordance with the vital interests of society and its members. Therefore it is fundamental to the superiority of the socialist order, and further development of the material productive forces and consolidation and development of socialist ownership are major problems for the whole Romanian people, every workers collective, and every Romanian citizen.

The CPR regards growth and development of socialist ownership as a composite process implemented as a dialectical unity of quantitative growth and qualitative enhancement of all its constituent elements, namely the object of ownership, the economic relations of possession, use and disposition, the method of acquisition, the mechanism and forms of economic implementation, etc. Growth and development of socialist ownership are primarily reflected in (a) quantitative growth, diversification, renovation and qualitative improvement of the objects of ownership (production means and consumer goods; (b) regular amplification of socialization of the production means and of dialectical interaction among the forms of socialist ownership; (c) better ways and means of uniting the direct producers with the material elements of production; and (d) increasing involvement of workers in management and organization of the operation and exploitation of socialist ownership, as well as regular improvement of the forms of mass participation in the management of material production and of social reproduction as a whole.

The growth and development of the objects of socialist ownership are actually the growth and development of the material elements of the productive forces (the means and objects of labor) and of consumer goods. The development of production technology and equipment, the intensified technical equipment of labor, and the considerably expanded automation and overall mechanization of material production have helped to narrow the technical gaps among various units, sectors and subsectors and to further the effort to equalize the levels of labor productivity attained in various production units and sectors. As a result the inequalities in the period of generalizing socialist ownership throughout the national economy and in economic relations concerning use of the production means are being gradually reduced, while the tendency to extend actual equality among the members of society to increasingly high levels is being accentuated. A process of continuing socialization of labor and the production means has been going on at the same time, which is manifested, among other things, in the more and more pronounced intensification of the social division of labor, the growing concentration and specialization of production and productive capital, and the expansion of change in activities and of cooperation in production.

As we know Romania has created, with Nicolae Ceausescu's telling contribution, a suitable organizational framework and a unique system of democratic management for workers effective participation in socioeconomic management. This original framework permits a high standard of workers self-management as a higher form of collective management.

The party secretary general's theoretical works and the CPR's economic policy also consider the dialectical relations between socialist ownership and the principles of labor and distribution, the decisive effect of socialist ownership upon distribution and the reverse effect of distribution upon socialist ownership, and the vital part played by improved distribution in consolidation and development of socialist ownership. We mention here only that the new regulations on

remuneration in this five-year plan generalize the overall contract system, correlate incomes more closely with the work performed and its results, increase the variable portion of the wage, and do away with guaranteed incomes without work and the ceiling on incomes from work.

Each of these regulations and their connections and interactions heighten interest in work, develop socialist cooperation and collectivism, and strengthen the responsibility of producers, workers and technicians, as well as that of managers of economic units, centrals and ministries for the quality of the decisions made, good management of public property, and fulfillment of the plan tasks in the enterprises under them. The law on the fundamental principles of the improved system of remuneration and distribution of workers incomes directly serves that purpose. It stipulates that all administrative, technical, economic and other specialized personnel, including the managements of the ministries and other central and local organs coordinating economic activities, as well as personnel in industrial centrals, are paid according to the average results for all the subordinate economic units and on the basis of fulfillment of 2-4 plan indicators, namely commodity output, the export plan, labor productivity and net output or other specific indicators.

The dialectical interaction and unity of the entire people's ownership with cooperative ownership occupy a place apart in the CPR's conception of socialist ownership relations. It is to Nicolae Ceausescu's credit that he exposed the theoretically erroneous and practically harmful nature of the view that contrasts these forms and of the attitude that underrates or neglects either one of them. The party secretary general said back in 1967 that "Any contrast of these two forms of ownership ..., or neglect of either one of them, can only harm the general interests of socialist society's progress." The close combination of the two forms of ownership "in a single whole in the entire national economy provides extensive opportunities for rational use of all of society's material and human resources and permits the steady growth of production, improvement of social relations, and increasing satisfaction of the urban and rural workers' growing material and cultural demands." The main direction of development of both forms of socialist ownership is the same, namely the entire people's sole communist ownership.

Private ownership and its volume grow on the basis of growth and consolidation of the entire people's socialist ownership and of cooperative ownership, and on the basis of their own work performed by the members of society. Meanwhile the use values that constitute its objects are diversified and qualitatively improved, and the correlation between this form of ownership and the needs of the members of society is accentuated. Amplification of the functions of private ownership is an essential point in this process, and one of the most graphic illustrations of it is the workers' contribution of social shares to the formation of the productive units' socioeconomic development funds. Through it the workers in the respective units become direct owners of a share (up to 50,000 lei) in the property of the enterprise wherein they work, in addition to their capacity as collective owners of a portion of the entire people's property.

What is the nature of this ownership? By virtue of their sources and their functions, the social shares are a part and a form of social-private ownership, the objects of which are the sums, or the values deposited, which the subject can

withdraw on the legally provided terms. These sums are allocated to form the productive units' socioeconomic development funds, so that they serve at the start as a direct means of microeconomic accumulation and pass through all stages of the uniform process of reproduction. Profit-sharing is the economic form of return for the owners, but in this case the private ownership acquires productive functions. And furthermore, as Nicolae Ceausescu pointed out, "Holding a social share in enterprise property will even further enhance the feeling of ownership of socialist property and the effort to protect and develop the economic units and to increase profitability and efficiency in all social activities. In the course of these new ownership relations every worker's individual incomes will be more closely correlated with production, labor productivity, economic effectiveness, and better use of manpower and raw materials."

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CSO: 2700/182

ROUNDTABLE ON COMBATTING HARMFUL RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

Bucharest ERA SOCIALISTA in Romanian No 7, 10 Apr 84 pp 19-26

[Discussion by Dr Octavian Chetan, Univ Reader Dr Septimiu Chelcea, Univ Prof Dr Ion Dumitru, Univ Reader Dr Georgeta Florea, Dr Neculai Frost, Univ Reader Dr Florin Georgescu, Univ Reader Dr Maria Iurescu (Suceava), Univ Prof Dr Achim Mihu (Cluj-Napoca), Univ Prof Dr Paul Popescu-Neveanu, Univ Reader Dr Octavian Nistor, Univ Reader Dr Laurentiu Pop (Cluj-Napoca) and Constantin Raducu]

[Text] Formation and development of the new man's socialist awareness involves mastery of some rich professional, technical-scientific and cultural disciplines and of the working class conception of the world as well as formation of higher moral convictions and advanced behavior based upon the profoundly humanistic principle that the human factor ultimately has a decisive influence upon the whole process of revolutionary change. In his speech at the Mangalia Working Conference in August 1983 Nicolae Ceausescu pointed out that the militant character of political-educational work must be permanently established, and accordingly all backward ideas and attitudes lingering in people's awareness must be combatted as vices of the past. More intensive scientific-materialist and revolutionary-humanist educational work is especially necessary under the conditions of contemporary society and the great progress made by science in knowledge of the natural and social processes, and it is an important aspect of the party's ideological activity.

The problems of this field of major importance to political-educational work was the subject of the discussion arranged by ERA SOCIALISTA with the participation of some teachers, researchers in the social sciences, and party activists. We are publishing the first part of this discussion in this issue.

OCTAVIAN NISTOR: Formation of the new man, with a high social awareness and a broad cultural horizon, and conversion of the people's entire way of working, living and thinking to the principles of socialist ethics and justice and of revolutionary humanism are central to the CPR's efforts and supreme goals of Romanian socialist society. Scientific-materialist education is an integral part of the process of forming and developing socialist awareness as well as integral part of political-ideological and cultural work, in accordance with the humanistic character of the Romanian order and with the contemporary scientific spirit.

Cultivating profound scientific-materialist convictions in people's thinking and behavior and indoctrinating the masses in the spirit of militant atheism are vital objectives of ideological work. Now that science has gained a position of primary importance in social activity, consolidation of profound scientific-materialist convictions is becoming a fundamental feature of socialist awareness.

In the CPR documents and Nicolae Ceausescu's speeches scientific-materialist education is regarded as a complete and comprehensive process for consolidating the scientific, dialectical-materialist conception of the world and life, raising the masses' general level of knowledge, and regularly cultivating the advanced values of socialist society. It is pointed out in this connection that backward ideas and behavior as well as mystical religious conceptions must be combatted with scientific arguments based on the historical and dialectical-materialist conception of the world and life.

FLORIN GEORGESCU: The fact that the religious phenomenon can be approached consistently if it is done from the positions of the revolutionary conception of the world (dialectical and historical materialism) is a principle fully demonstrated today by the results of political-educational work. In other words we are not promoting any form of atheism as an alternative to religion (although the dialogue with the other forms and a principled receptiveness to them are necessary) but the one that qualifies as an aspect and reflection of the working-class conception of the world and life. The atheism promoted by the CPR does not confine itself to theoretical discourse in the area of abstract discussions but presents a practical program aimed at man's emancipation and complete fulfillment of his personality.

Clearly the axiological questions and the humanistic content and aims of the historical and dialectical-materialist conception of the world are coming to the fore today both in ideological confrontations with the non-Marxist conceptions in general and with the contemporary fideist conceptions in particular. They are important in guidance of political-educational work with all categories of workers.

Accordingly we must militate for widespread knowledge and mastery of the humanistic values promoted by Romanian society and for knowledge of the action taken by the Romanian party and state to serve all workers' interests and ideals.

GEORGETA FLOREA: I agree entirely with the foregoing statements and stress the fact that construction and all-around development of socialist society take the form of a comprehensive process involving all aspects and components of the social system, as the CPR documents require. Therefore in Romania too we see a considerable decline in religious belief throughout the population and widespread formation of a new attitude mainly based upon a scientific, dialectical-materialist interpretation of the world and life.

You do not have to make any number of extensive studies to determine a decline in the number of active believers in Romania. Many members of the various sects resort to religious services only in extreme situations or only for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Fewer and fewer of them involve religion in acts of daily life, while a growing number of those who consider themselves religious practice an imitative behavior, have a limited religious awareness, and observe few ritual

elements. Sometimes they remain with various churches while accepting not their explanations of the origin or nature of man and the world but primarily their moral standards. There are many who accord religion a more and more limited role, accepting and applying science and materialism to the most varied problems of life, work, health, child rearing etc.

But not to present an idyllic picture of the facts, this reversal of religious belief is not progressing steadily and it has not reached all elements of all the social categories, so that some age groups, people with little general culture, many of whom live in rural areas, some occupational, ethnic and other categories, and some of those less involved in political and social activity are still living in a world structured on a mystical-religious basis. For some categories of people the reversal of religion stops at the half-way point. A number of studies or observations indicate that a still large category of people base their thought and actions upon science, technology and many of the dialectical-materialist principles but still accept and observe some religious ideas and practices. Other categories, by no means negligible, do not go to church regularly but become active again in that respect under more difficult circumstances. For other individuals, this reversal of religious belief has created a paradoxical situation. It has only meant loss of confidence in the traditional religions and preservation of the illusion that there must be a better faith. In one way or another this has brought them under the influence of the neo-Protestant sects, which are becoming increasingly militant. When we consider these points alone it becomes clear that the formation of a uniform conception of the world and life and its conversion to a factor for Romanian society's development are not progressing constantly, with no difficulties or setbacks. Despite the great changes in Romania in the last few decades, the huge gains in socialist construction and revolution, and the constantly growing impact of the technical-scientific revolution, some members of society are still sharing ideas and beliefs from past periods that are proven anachronisms in socioeconomic progress, scientific knowledge and culture in general. Awareness of this situation calls for greater militance in the whole effort to create a new intellectuality in keeping with the nature and aims of the new social order.

ACHIM MIHU: When the textbooks on historical and dialectical materialism discuss social awareness they usually say among other things that religion is a form of the latter. The Marxist studies and papers on religion most often develop the theory mentioned in those textbooks. In most cases the information about religion provided this way is essentially confined to the following ideas: As a form of social awareness, religion is determined by the material conditions of existence, or by social existence. Like any form of social awareness, it has a certain effect upon the material area that determines it and also upon the other elements of the respective awareness. Having appeared at a certain stage of social development, it will disappear under the conditions of socialist and communist society. Religion can be in advance of social existence or lag behind its development. It differs from the other forms of social awareness in certain distinctive features. Except for the last one, all the statements apply, to varying degrees of course, to all the forms of social awareness (political, legal artistic etc.) and are accordingly very general and have a limited power to differentiate knowledge according to the particular situation of the religious phenomenon.

The fact is that we know a great many generalities about religion but we have a less accurate and effective knowledge of its explanatory variables, their scope and distribution, and the mystical believers' influences upon society and the individual. We have to acknowledge the existence of a certain theoretical inflexibility on this subject, and some repetitions of general opinions. I shall mention just a few points below that bear out this conclusion.

It is often asserted that the origin and development of religion have both social causes and those that pertain to knowledge. In the beginning men could not explain natural phenomena scientifically. Later on class relationships arose among them that gave rise to social forces opposed to the fulfillment of human nature. In Engels' view they dominated man as inevitably as the natural forces. Proceeding from those ideas to a somewhat simplistic interpretation of them, the reasoning in these cases was as follows: Once people explain natural phenomena scientifically under socialism and exploitation has been eliminated, religion no longer has any real basis, and its maintenance is to be explained either by the lag in people's awareness or by their failure to master science well enough to explain natural phenomena in themselves.

In quite a few cases we do not make adequate use of the results of knowledge in the last century in the development of Marxist philosophy and consequently in the atheist educational effort. The idea promoted by the CPR and its secretary general that the answers to contemporary social-political questions are not to be found in works published a century ago is also quite relevant to the relations of science with the religious spirit.

OCTAVIAN CHETAN: Achim Miha's criticisms bring out some gaps in the structure of the courses on historical and dialectical materialism in Romanian higher education. But I do not think those criticisms can be extrapolated to all atheist educational work. Even in the case of the university courses and lectures, it cannot be said that they unjustifiably reduce religion to one of the forms of social awareness. Those courses approach religion as a form of social awareness and as a particular kind of manifestation of it, but they do not claim that this exhausts the problems of religion. They only maintain directly or indirectly that philosophy should analyze religious awareness by its own methods. Moreover a philosophy course cannot resolve problems that pertain or should pertain to the sociology of religion, psychology of religion, history of religions, etc. I think it is primarily the way religion is analyzed as a form of social awareness that is deficient in some courses. I mean the excess of generalizations, superficial treatment, repetition of a few quotations from the classics presented as definitive solutions instead of elements of a current analysis, a certain inflexibility, etc.

I think it would be useful to discuss the way the religious phenomenon is analyzed in the university course on historical and dialectical materialism and in higher education in general. A course on Scientific-Materialist and Revolutionary-Humanist Education, with a collection of texts, was prepared and published in 1980 (Didactic and Pedagogic Publishing House, 296 pages). What was the intended purpose of that course and what was the real one? Was it at least a semester's subject of study in any university program or has it been only a promising initiative since the time it was published? It certainly was an attempt to develop a course on atheism conceived in a form much improved over the

previously existing ones. But unfortunately this published course has remained unknown, undiscussed in the technical publications, and unused in the educational process.

SEPTIMIU CHELCEA: Scientific materialist education, implemented in a great variety of ways, is based upon the CPR's theoretical conception. It is also intended to incorporate the latest advances of scientific research, and I think the social-human disciplines have an important part to play in that effort. Sociology, psychosociology, psychology and psychophysiology (to confine myself to the sciences closer to my professional interests) can make major contributions to the formation of socialist awareness by releasing man from the "imaginary daisy chains" of religious beliefs, as Marx put it. I am referring not only to countering religious dogmas with scientific explanations, although the potentials of that procedure in the case of subjective feelings are far from exhausted, but also to use of the theories, methods and techniques of the said fields to investigate the religious phenomenon, religious practices, methods of proselyting for sects, etc.

When I say that there are still areas of the spiritual field where the findings of the scientific studies could be more fully used to demonstrate the inconsistency of the mystical-religious speculations, I am thinking of the problems that have been regularly treated by the social-human sciences only in the second half of this century. Some of the new sects are basing their ideologies on mystical speculations about psychology, and the scientific results of modern psychological research cannot be overlooked in combatting them.

ION DUMITRU: The conflict between science and religion and the insoluble contradiction between them on the cognitive levels are not recent and, historically speaking, we could say that they have always existed. During the current technical-scientific revolution science has become an extraordinarily important productive force with a major role on both the cognitive and socioeconomic levels.

The rapid development of scientific knowledge of the universe has strongly influenced contemporary awareness. This development was accompanied by a considerable curtailment of the interval between the "theoretical discovery" and its application in socioeconomic practice. The latter requires particular procedures to explain the relationships between man and nature and between science and philosophy, and those relationships cannot be dissociated from an overall view of the fundamental problem of philosophy and its epistemological corollary. People are confronted with a contradiction between their constant aspiration to know as much as possible about the structure and laws of nature and the surrounding world and their own nature and that of the cosmic system, which do not permit them ever to entirely fulfill that aspiration. But this contradiction is not inherent solely in the nature of the two factors, the world and man. It is also the main lever of the entire intellectual process, and it is resolved every day on a continuing basis, exactly as for example some mathematical problems are solved by an infinite series or a continuous fraction. Actually any mental picture of the cosmic system is and remains objectively limited by the historical conditions and subjectively limited by its author's physical and mental structure.

Religion has always tried to use either the still unclarified problems of science or discoveries that called for reconsideration of some scientific knowledge and necessitated new methodological or technical procedures. The idealist theologies and philosophies were always ready to interpret most unsolved problems concerning knowledge of life from their own point of view.

The astonishing and constant advances of the natural sciences are also to be explained by their permanent liberation from theology and idealist-fideist interpretations. Nevertheless there are many attempts in the contemporary world to use the scientific advances primarily for a modern re-mythologizing of culture and human knowledge and to reconsider some scientific advances in a theological light in order to use them as arguments in favor of theological thought. There are many cases where the new scientific discoveries, especially in biology, medicine and physics are used to revive abandoned semiscientific or semireligious theories and to develop various forms of mysticism, occultism, spiritism and even racism. The reader no doubt recalls the subjectivist, agnostic and indeterminist interpretations that various philosophical schools gave to quantum mechanics, the theory of relativity and the generalized theory of relativity, which are important scientific discoveries of this century. Science, through its representatives, strictly criticized those interpretations, and world-famous scholars like Max Planck, Paul Langevin, Louis de Broglie, N. Bohr and J. Vigier, some of whom were direct participants in the new discoveries, helped to do away with the philosophical distortions and reoriented the subsequent studies, which produced fruitful results that are widely known today. Science gave the contemporary world discoveries that profoundly affected daily life by their theoretical importance but especially by their practical applications, such as nuclear fission, electronics and computers, the unprecedented development of chemistry, the beginning of the conquest of outer space, the incipient decipherment of the genetic code and material base of hereditary diseases, automated industrial processes, nonconventional biotechnologies, etc.

Theology, idealist philosophy, fideism and the church in general (regardless of the belief it is propagating) prefer a temporary retreat before these achievements, which have affected or will affect the way of life of billions of human beings sooner or later. The attempts of fideism to distort the scientific values have become increasingly futile.

The empirical facts, scientific discoveries and the laws of physics, chemistry and biology are objective, and only their misinterpretation can give rise to idealist, subjectivist, fideist, or positivist ideas that interfere with the development of science and the resolution of temporary difficulties by creating ideological confusion and supporting "formulation" of scientific findings from the fideist point of view.

CONSTANTIN RADUCU: Whereas the philosophy of nature constructed in the pre-Marxist materialist conceptions, as well as some overall views of the world formed today by some scientists and philosophers, often had limitations that have favored or are favoring fideist speculations and distortions, dialectical-materialist ontology closed off the sources of such distortions of the results of knowledge because it has a uniform theoretical basis that differs in principle from the premises of the old philosophy of nature. This made it possible to transcend the illuminist idea that religion originated as a false

reflection of the world due solely to ignorance of natural phenomena. To be sure that equation has its significance, calling for the use of a wealth of information to counter both the naive religious picture and the more refined fideist speculations in the effort to disseminate scientific knowledge even now. But it is a major problem here to understand the underlying mechanisms that permit the distorted perception of existence as a whole or of some areas of it. It is clear today that the actual limitations of social-historical practice gave rise to the "need of religion" in the societies split into antagonistic classes and, under certain social conditions, favored the fantastic interpretations and unscientific conceptions of the world and life.

FLORIN GEORGESCU: Once it was established in man's awareness, the idea of the supernatural operated in nearly all of his relations with nature or with his neighbors. Therefore, although it was a phenomenon distinct from the rest of social experience, religion spread over the other subsystems, appearing as a sui generis strategy of man as a productive agent in relation to nature, as a way of explaining the world, as morality, etc. The many-faceted nature of religion enables it to react in various directions even in our time, when it is subject to pressures for change that it has never known in its long history. In order to avoid being discredited on grounds of knowledge, religion will retreat before science, giving up its absolute claims and the idea that it is the only way to understand the world. It is recognized that some of its explanations are outmoded and not to be accepted tale quale. But it is making itself felt more intensively in other systems of values. For example, religion is regarded as man's only opportunity to fulfill himself as a moral being, and there is no lack of arguments for its validity for the moral system because in its historical past religion was also structured in the form of moral principles and standards. But the point is overlooked that a fund of ideas of ethical significance is derived from people's practical morality or from the great philosophical systems, while those ideas lose their ethical force when they are subordinated to a religious structure that makes them ineffective as a moral model serving man. Today religion often acknowledges the ability of science to penetrate the secrets of the world, but it also claims that truth can also be reached through faith. Now the argument is based on philosophical concepts and appeals to the discourse of idealist philosophy.

My comments are intended to demonstrate that the many aspects of religion as a social phenomenon enable it operate in one way or another in the contemporary world in order to avoid restriction of its influence.

PAUL POPESCU-NEVEANU: The cognitive confrontation of science with religion is actually an age-old confrontation between the rational, enlightened attitude of science and the idealist attitude. We must also allow for the fact that religion adapts itself quite accurately to the various categories of believers. It relies on mythology in the case of those still lacking any well-structured scientific background, imputing magical significance to religious operations, while on another level it calls the myths metaphors and allegories, resorting to more and more sophisticated forms of theology and attributing idealist meanings to the religious ceremonies.

The specific approach is basic to effective scientific-materialist and humanist educational work. The opposition to religion should dislodge religion where it

is and as it is, in order both to consolidate and rehabilitate knowledge and to promote the rationalist-humanist values at the same time.

GEORGETA FLOREA: In connection with the idea expressed here that scientific-materialist education must give the believer an opportunity to evaluate his own beliefs critically himself, I consider it absolutely necessary to discuss more explicitly, with specific data particularized for each individual sect, the actual role religion has been playing as complex social phenomenon. The bad effects of religious belief upon the believers' thought and existence must be further emphasized, as well as the artificial barriers it places in the way of their full social-political integration.

In general, differing or even contradictory opinions circulate about the social role of religion. Some maintain that certain religions characteristic of stages of historical development have been conservative and have obstructed social progress while others, on the contrary, have been factors for the rising evolution of society. Still others claim that the same religion is progressive in one stage and reactionary in another. And there are quite a few who, whether they are believers or unbelievers, categorically support the idea that religion has always been and still is a major force for humanity's development. These equally erroneous views overlook the fact that religions limit the effectiveness of any human action by their nature and by belief in the supernatural. It is true that in many of the areas or situations wherein man has felt helpless and overpowered he has not given up trying to overcome them, often appealing to religious persons, institutions or even rituals in order to do so, especially when society offered him no other prospects. Although their intervention did not bring about the solution of any of those problems, the false impression was created that historical progress was possible only or also because of religion.

In support of this claim the unquestionable fact is invoked that a number of movements of religious inspiration, many believers and many representatives of the various sects were engaged in the past or are engaged today in efforts to defend human dignity and freedom and in the struggle against exploitation and oppression and are militating for world peace and collaboration. In the first place the fact is overlooked here, intentionally or unintentionally, that other religious movements, other representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and a number of fanatical believers are rallying to the most reactionary social forces, justifying exploitation, and preaching unconditional surrender to the vicissitudes of life in the name of religion and the same arguments, beliefs and principles or, on the contrary, they are fomenting violence, subordinating reason and science to faith, distorting the aims and values of humanist culture, and opposing any truly revolutionary actions. In the second place, those opinions make the mistake of confusing religion with its adherents. It is not religion that changes society but the people who do not realize that its tenets are fanatical and its solutions Utopian, believe in it, and involve it in the social conflicts, sometimes even without the consent of the religious hierarchy. The social conflicts are the cause of social evolution and not the religious belief whereby the believers justify their aspirations to a better world. The power of attraction that religion still exerts lies in the fact that it promises and maintains the illusion that the effectiveness of the various economic, political, legal, moral and other actions can be enhanced by appeals to the supernatural, whereas it is because of this premise, namely belief in the supernatural, that

that the functions performed by religion have contradictory effects upon mankind's progress and obstruct it.

Religion is never a gratuitous creation of the human mind and imagination. It always has certain functions, whether to sanction, justify or explain the existing realities or to suggest the illusion that people can find ways in its precepts to improve their existential status. It has always adapted its doctrine, rituals, institutional components, moral and legal standards, etc. in such a way that it has created the impression that it is in step with the real process of social development and has succeeded in maintaining the loyalty of its adherents. That trend is present now more than ever in all religions of the contemporary world. Therefore I think it is still a permanent task of scientific-materialist education to explain the real significance of the restructured ideologies characteristic of the main religions today.

MARIA IURESCU: There is no question that if we are to overcome mystical-religious attitudes we must employ particular ways and means suited to the religious phenomenon as a whole and its interaction with the many levels of the social system. Therefore, in addition to a joint effort on the part of interdisciplinary scientific research to investigate the causes and the social, psychosocial, traditional, family and other factors, the educational program also requires some new approaches suited to the distinctive features of the religious phenomenon under the current impact of the scientific-technical revolution and its socioeconomic implications for man.

The sociological studies we have made in several rural communities in Suceava County concerning the relationship between the lay and religious attitudes in the rural world, as well as the study of the structure and intensity of religious belief in several categories of workers in the industrial enterprises in Suceava municipality, indicate that religious belief is in a special transitional state as a direct result of all the qualitative changes that have taken place in all components of the social system in the course of socialist construction. The trend of a great many people toward atheist convictions is a distinct possibility that has been and is implemented by the action of the subjective, purposeful factor, the political factor par excellence. There is also a considerable development of religious indifference going on against the background of the generally declining intensity of religious belief.

Despite these general considerations brought out by the said sociological studies as well as others, we are still confronted with the proliferation of particular manifestations of religious belief, especially obscurantism and sectarian fanaticism. This calls for a diversification of the operating methods, that is the approaches, of scientific-materialist and revolutionary humanist education in keeping at least with the entirety of this phenomenon and the interactions it involves. But I feel this differentiated interpretation is often limited to a formal theoretical level in our activity and is perceived less as a practical requirement. Nor should we overlook the fact that some of the reasons for the phenomena of alienation, including religious alienation, may lie in the social dysfunctions due to some objective or subjective factors.

SEPTIMIU CHELCEA: I think the religious phenomenon can also be analyzed in depth and with real chances of a gain in knowledge from the standpoint of the

theory of social contradictions. Social contradictions occur and take various forms with varying degrees of intensity under socialism as in any stage of social development. Study of them in order to determine ways of resolving the contradictions that arise in society has disclosed a fertile approach to the social-human phenomena and processes, including the religious ones.

I think more consistent concentration of sociological research and field investigation upon identification of the major social contradictions in the tissue of them, distinguishing between the primary and secondary ones, the typical and atypical ones, and the internal and external ones could provide a more discriminating answer to the question under discussion. Failure to realize that in socialism temporary economic difficulties can arise and very different individual attitudes and behavior are still to be found has led some analysts of the religious phenomenon to think religion is only an epiphenomenon in socialism. Due to the idyllic view of the revolutionary process it is sometimes forgotten that frustration, fear etc. can still be felt in various ways on the individual level. Physical and mental distress and fear of natural or social disasters have not disappeared. Those individual mental realities often pave the way to religious beliefs, and scientific analysis of the religious phenomenon must allow for them.

In treating religion from the standpoint of social contradictions we must also point out the ability of socialism to resolve them, as well as the trend toward constant curtailment of the influence of the individual factors generating religious belief. Socialism creates real possibilities for fulfillment of the personality and establishes equitable human relations throughout society to a greater extent than any other form of social organization known to man.

ACHIM MIHU: It is a historical fact that the exploiting classes have been eliminated from Romanian society. But that does not mean that religion is only an epiphenomenon with no objective causes, which can be eliminated solely by popularizing science and by political-ideological work. Although exploitation has disappeared it cannot be said that religion no longer has any basis in social relations.

Steps of great and profound significance have been taken in Romania to reduce social inequalities. In the case of wages, the present ratio between low and high incomes is an outstanding achievement of social justice according to the ideals of socialism and communism. To be sure there are still differences between physical and intellectual labor and between city and village, and they can be very fully reflected in people's awareness and beliefs. The great value of social behavior and especially of human relations must be fully recognized. They are not speculative but very factual, so that observance of the principles and standards of socialist morality is becoming an important factor for bringing out their human content. And finally, the real and increasingly effective effort of the workers to develop the Romanian economy and culture will determine not only Romania's living standard but also the state of its socialist awareness. I think this is the certain and basic way to overcome the mystical conceptions of society, nature and man in favor of science and a conception of the world in which man will be entirely on his own.

PAUL POPESCU-NEVEANU: The interpretation of atheism solely as a denial of religion could lead to the conclusion that when religious belief is suppressed a vacuum is left in the individual and social awareness that must be filled with

another content, giving rise to the question "What takes the place of religion?" The question already implies a wrong formulation of the problem because revolutionary atheism denies religion in the very process of forming and developing a scientific and humanistic conception of the world. It is accordingly a constructive atheism for purposes of cultural emancipation in the form of the triumph of a new awareness and the formation of the personality of the new man. Moreover the only way to overcome religious alienation is to replace religious belief with other concepts and values. In this case fear of a "vacuum" and aimless perplexity about substitutes are and can only be reflections of the difficulty of breaking with a mode of thought and feeling and ultimately reflect resistance to intellectual dealienation. Paradoxically, dealienation means an intellectual liberation but it does not occur without tacit internal resistance, especially in connection with the contrast between the structure and significance of religious belief and the structure and significance of the scientific-humanist attitude. Religion is a form of intellectual alienation while atheism means dealienation from the divine fiction and concentration upon human and social reality, which enormously enhances personal dignity and moral responsibility.

While the negative measure of religious belief is intellectual alienation, involving elements of social, moral, cultural, economic and sometimes political alienation, the positive measure of educational efforts to form and consolidate the scientific-humanist conception is dealienation, a process of higher intellectual reconstruction that restores its human authenticity to the personality through social-historical commitment, through participation in a living culture and through actual moral achievement serving the highest ideals.

It is known that religious belief, despite its evolution in the areas of fiction and illusion, favors concentration on the individual existence and fosters egotism in devious ways. The believer's value judgments remain egocentric, giving rise to a facile individualistic containment. It is a real situation that cannot be ignored in dealienation work. This means that all the actions taken must also bring out the prospects of changing the existential status of the person who is ceasing to be a believer. If we operate in compartments, comparing religion just with science or morality, with social progress or history and culture, etc. we may fail to give the believer any effective support in reconsidering his own lot through rehabilitation of his vital interests. In each of the said compartments we must allow for the system of religious belief and emphasize combatting a form of alienation that is related to all its other aspects.

Religious dealienation necessarily requires reorientation of values in the direction of the intellectual wealth of the new man, who does not try to "escape from history" but is defined as its purposeful creator. Youths are especially interested in discussing the problems of man's destinies and the ways to happy fulfillment. They as well as the others must be led to define their aim in life, to choose between life's purposes considered humanistically or religiously, and between the prospects based upon reality or upon fiction, the latter emptying life properly speaking of its content.

LAURENTIU POP: I feel we need a comprehensive analysis of the indifference in some individuals' attitude toward the religious phenomenon, especially since that condition and that characteristic affect a part of the population. The opinions of a great many researchers and the conclusions of some studies

indicate a wide range of categories of people who are indifferent to the religious phenomenon. The attitude of people of the contemporary world is undoubtedly governed, structured and shaped to a great extent by science and technology, which are both rational but do not automatically generate scientific atheism but keep restructuring people's convictions and ideas. Yet without rational thought or a conception of the world permitting integration of the knowledge acquired, the gains in knowledge may be converted into confused and distorted interpretations. Disbelief based on a spontaneous materialism of common thought cannot protect thought from the phantoms of religion.

CONSTANTIN RADUCU: As alienated reflections of human nature, religions have assimilated and exploited some aspirations to justice and adopted certain moral standards, especially the general-human ones, but they treat those standards dogmatically, from idealist positions. Their alienating effects were due to the fact that they divide, marginalize and depersonalize the believer's awareness, as demonstrated by the isolation of some categories of believers from the positive, progressive values of science and culture and from secular traditions and customs. This partly explains the fact that the believers in question are not fulfilled in keeping with the opportunities offered by society, losing themselves and living dull, tedious lives devoid of creative happiness and satisfaction.

MARIA IURESCU: The present certainly requires an especially rational, technical, scientific and less emotional approach to reality, one that often affects the working methods of atheist education. But in an immaterial world like the religious one it is particularly necessary for the emotional aspect to be involved as one of the essentials for effective educational work.

The emotions perform particular psychopedagogic functions in the structure of scientific-materialist educational work and in the latter's relations with attitudes and conduct. Without their participation, ideas do not become convictions, and reason is powerless without emotional support and confidence in people and their creative potentials. The scientific-technical revolution unquestionably leads to a higher cultural level for the broad masses of workers by providing a secular, rationalist and essentially nonreligious field of thought. But mass culture may be an inadequate resource for creating the certainties that can dislodge a belief. I believe the conclusion in this case is that we must use the material conveyed by the mass media as a source of education and make the act of scientific-materialist education and act of authentic culture.

In another connection, the technical-scientific revolution is accompanied, objectively, by phenomena of social mobility and modification of the environment for a great many workers. Under these circumstances, the progress of science and technology makes a basically favorable contribution by restricting the scope of religious belief (causing a real religious crisis that places religion permanently on the defensive) both by enhancing people's culture and knowledge and by dislocating the traditionally religious communities and dispersing them in the process of adjustment to a new model of civilization.

On the other hand, the whole social background against which contemporary scientific-technical progress is taking place can lead to the proliferation of new manifestations of religious belief, which assertion is no paradox when we consider that due to the mobility of the labor force we are seeing a spread of some of the

virulent forms of religion transmitted to the cities or even amplified in the villages. Of course that is not the only cause, but groups of believers who have escaped from the social control of the village and do not find help in integrating immediately in the city can become victims of sectarian proselyting. The rapid social mobility and acceptance of another social status is not always followed by an equally rapid change in mentality and attitudes.

OCTAVIAN CHETIAN: I do not think sufficient attention is always paid to in-depth analysis of religious morality in scientific-materialist and atheist education. There is no lack of extensive and convincing reference material written from the standpoints of psychosociology and individual psychology and Marxist ethics as well. It is a field in which some points are still unclear even now, although some articles dispose of the problems categorically, if in a rather simplistic and cursory way.

Now as we know the moral values are models of behavior and action as well as models of an existential attitude. They are structured in systems of values and cannot be exchanged or replaced one by another as we change a used part in a gearing that is still good. The question still comes up in discussions whether some Christian moral values could not be retained and integrated in constructive, functional secular moral structures in Romanian socialist society. The basic fact is overlooked that there are no isolated moral values that every moral value acquires significance solely within a structure, and that Christian morality is theonomous, Christonomous and Christocentric. Even moral "commandments" that appear generally human acquire various particular interpretations and nuances depending on the general moral background wherein they are implanted. After the divinity is instituted as the absolute legislator of moral standards, the supreme moral good is identified in all the religious ethical systems with exact fulfillment of the divine will. Accentuating this characteristic of any religious morality, Christian morality in continuation of the Judaic one is primarily a morality of blind, unconditional submission by the believer to the "incomprehensible" will of the divinity. Even if some of the requirements of religious morality reflect more general standards of human behavior in a particular way, they do not depend upon any ideal image of man or humanity but strictly upon the individual's and the communities' absolute obedience to the absolute divine will.

From this standpoint, followed by determination of the morality of the doctrines of the chief Christian and neo-Protestant sects and supplemented by analysis of the recent trends toward modernization of traditional Christian morality, I believe a gain in clarity and depth could also be made in this area.

FLORIN GEORGESCU: As a form of social awareness present in the Romanian social system, religion is a remnant and a manifestation of the old. Its existence under new conditions other than those that made it necessary is explained by its relative independence and by its ability to become relatively independent of social evolution and to disregard the changes made in material existence. But I would be proceeding undialectically if I explained the lag in people's awareness, in the form of religious awareness, solely by its inertia before the material conditions of existence. Such an interpretation would suggest that religious alienation can be overcome only by educational programs and that the effort should be made solely on the margins of intellectual life by improving it.

We are justified in saying that the particular causes of beliefs in the supernatural disappeared with the process of socialist construction. The inhumanity of the relations characteristic of past societies led people of those times to relate to the "heavenly world," to believe in the existence of the supernatural and to hope for humanity and fulfillment as people through its miraculous aid. But if social relations function consistently as socialist relations under all circumstances and on all levels, people no longer have any reason to expect outside aid. But the new socialist relations must be viewed in their entirety, in their evolution, and in their dialectics. For example, they appear and function as social relations of a new nature, but we must not forget that there are no social relations in themselves, without people. They always function as relations among individuals. We see them as a general framework only in an abstract form, through thought. In this case people apparently are to conform to them, coming from somewhere outside. But neither such people nor such relations exist. In practice these relations take life from the lives of people, of actual individuals, who yet will not always conform to the standards based on the nature of the new kind of relations.

To be sure the institution of socialist ownership of the production means, of relations of cooperation and mutual aid in production, of the political and legal superstructure suited to them, and of the other elements of the socialist superstructure provides the necessary background for humanizing social relations, but it does not guarantee that they will function accordingly in every specific case. Humanity is inherent in the socialist way of life, but it becomes real only through people and their behavior toward each other.

OCTAVIAN NISTOR: Knowledge of the religious phenomenon as such, of its dynamics and evolution, of the changes taking place within the various religions, and of the trends toward adjustment and renovation in the context of the contemporary social-political and cultural-scientific changes is unquestionably one of the major requirements for overcoming man's religious alienation. Among the phenomena characteristic of the present period we note the irreversible processes of secularization, of steady decline in religious belief, and of aggravation of the religious crisis, which is also apparent in the trend toward constant dissolution and fragmentation of the traditional religions with proliferation of the various sects and religious groups. The process of fragmentation and secession is characteristic of all religions and has accompanied these throughout their history even from the time of their origin.

What particularly attracts the attention of public opinion and of students of this phenomenon today is the growing proliferation of neo-Protestant sects and the appearance in the capitalist countries of a host of extremely virulent and harmful "new sects" which, due to antihumanist practices and maneuvers to depersonalize their adherents, including many adolescents and youths, are coming to acts of violence, aggression and even collective suicide. For these reasons many countries of the world have outlawed those sects, which are sometimes called "savage religions." As indicated in many articles published recently in the international press and in Romanian publications as well, some sects are actually organizations for the enrichment of their leaders, or for propaganda against the progressive forces and ideas, under the pretext of religion. As Nicolae Ceausescu said in his speech at the Expanded Plenum of the CPR Central Committee of 1-2 June 1982, "Let us expose particularly the mystical activities of some religious

sects used as tools in the hands of the reactionary imperialist circles, some fascist circles, and some swindlers who wish to distract mankind from the vital problems of the world of today and to take this means of diversion and espionage against other states."

Scientific-materialist educational work requires knowledge of the sects' characteristics and the nature of their activities and attitudes in society as well as the forms they take under the new conditions. This is especially necessary because the sectarian phenomenon is not homogeneous although it has a number of common features. As particular kinds of religious or pseudoreligious communities, the contemporary sects should not be treated in general, in an abstract way. Knowledge of their general features must be combined with determination of the differences and their distinctive characteristics. Some Romanian and foreign researchers quite rightly distinguish between the sectarian communities that originated by separation from another religious group because of doctrinal, moral or organizational disputes and the pseudoreligious ones that have sprung up in the capitalist countries, especially since World War II, as a result of the crises and contradictions within the "consumer society." In their case it is no longer a matter of separation from another religious community but of formation of groups around leaders who advance new doctrines, usually consisting of eclectic mixtures of religious and pseudoreligious ideas, amalgams of occult elements and oriental mysticism combined with aspects of primitive Christianity, to say nothing of antihumanist and anticommunist ideas. Some sociologists have also called these communities "savage religions," "new sects," "pseudoreligions," "nonconfessional religions," etc.

NECULAI FROST: When we analyze the causes of the persistence of the religious phenomenon and the existence of certain cults or sects, I think we must further emphasize the role of religious propaganda manufactured abroad, the content of which is political par excellence, the religious form and subject matter being used for the sole purpose of penetrating people's awareness more readily. It is also intended to use the long experience of some sects and cults in propaganda activity and their ability to appeal to a wide variety of social categories. The obvious purpose of these religious organizations and centers abroad is even clear from the titles they have given themselves, as for example "The International Underground Evangelism," "The Anticommunist Crusade," "Jesus for the Communist World," "The Center for Study of Religions and Communism in the Socialist Countries," etc.

One of the main areas in which many religious or pseudoreligious sects are active is isolation of their members from political and social activity and cultivation of intolerance of other conceptions of life. Although the cultural club, radio, TV, and the cinema have become ordinary media of acculturation, some sectarian preachers try to prevent their followers from using them. The sect members are prevented from knowing scientific truth and are advised not to read newspapers, literary works, etc. The sectarian pastors and preachers propagate contempt for culture and obstruct their followers' intellectual development.

The recent period shows a special effort particularly on the part of the sects to convert and indoctrinate elements in the ranks of youth. In order to attract children and youths some sects have founded clubs alongside churches and meeting houses where films, slides and transparencies are shown and games, choruses,

bands, orchestras etc. are organized. In this way the sects maintain a subtle and sustained effort to manipulate their members ideologically and psychologically and to transform them by isolating them from social and cultural activities in Romanian socialist society. They impose standards of living and behavior aimed at total submission, at the threat of all kinds of penalties or the promise of an "eternal and happy life" in the hereafter. They capitalize cleverly on their members' ignorance and various difficulties and dissatisfactions.

SEPTIMIU CHELCEA: The modern scientific studies have considerably amplified knowledge of the believers' psychophysiological mechanisms, the cerebral units involved in emotional states have been studied, and great progress has been made in determining the differentiated roles of the cerebral hemispheres in the control of emotional states. Yet there are still many unknowns in the believers' psychophysiology, and without clarifying the inner mechanisms of belief it may be difficult to counteract the practices of the sects that manipulate the personality, since it is known that recruitment of new members to such sects, their break with society, and their obedience to the "spiritual chiefs" are most often accomplished by appealing to the emotional reactions.

Depersonalization within the sects through elimination of the rule of reason (as it is explained in the technical works) emphasizes both capitalizing on social dysfunctions (breakdown of interhuman cohesion in capitalist society, destructuring of the models of behavior, lack of the ideal of life, economic crises and difficulties, fear of outbreak of the nuclear cataclysm, etc.) and exploitation, for the sects' benefit, of some advances of the sciences of man (the laws of mental conditioning, techniques of attitudinal and behavioral change, etc.).

Militating for human dignity, psychology is engaged in the struggle against man's subjection by the sects. It has perfected "deprogramming" procedures and has tested methods for social reintegration of those who have succeeded in leaving the sects. Meanwhile psychosociology offers a number of theoretical disciplines and many opportunities for intervention in human groups in order to strengthen cohesion, intensify and prolong interpersonal relations, etc. Today it can contribute effectively to formation of the communist ideal of life by providing scientific principles for organizing education through work and for work, and the recruiting ground for religious beliefs is being constantly narrowed in this way.

OCTAVIAN NISTOR: Scientific-materialist education must definitively refute and expose the sects and religious groups prohibited by law whose activities are profoundly antisocial and incompatible with social progress and with the feelings and way of life and thought of the people of Romanian society. Those sects and religious groups were outlawed for their antisocial and antihuman practices, as for example refusing to exercise civil rights and obligations such as voting, military service and testifying in court, refusing to recognize civil status documents, rejecting and evading social obligations, prohibiting access to forms of culture other than religious ones, rejecting science and the benefits of civilization to the point of ignoring medicine, etc. The outlawed sects and groups maintain among their members an atmosphere of depression, helplessness, indifference, demoralization and chauvinism, and as it has been said here they disseminate foreign propaganda hostile to Romania and socialism. As Nicolae Ceausescu pointed out, "In conformity with the Constitution and the laws of the land, we intend to go on providing for the normal conduct of the religious sects"

activities. Of course we have not allowed and shall not in the future allow anyone to use these sects for activity against the people, socialist construction, or national sovereignty and independence. I think that in general the religious sects should concern themselves with their problems, fully respect the laws of the state, and support the policy of socialist construction and general social development as well as the national policy of peace, collaboration and detente."

NECULAI FROST: We must bear in mind that the Romanian state's policy on religious sects includes two interrelated and interacting aspects, namely freedom of conscience, with the right to religion and the practice of the legally recognized sects, and every citizen's obligation to respect the Constitution and the laws of the land and to do his duty to country and people. In promoting that policy the party and state proceed from the fact that all citizens, whether they are believers or atheists, are free citizens with equal rights and the duty and opportunity to participate in the management of society and all activities and in the nation's economic, social, political and cultural affairs and to enjoy the material and cultural values offered to all workers by the Romanian socialist system.

But there are some servants of certain religions and especially sects and some believers who are trying to use religious ideas and practices against socialism and against the interests of the Romanian people and state. We are also witnessing, as Nicolae Ceausescu said, "the attempt to make some elements of the sects tools of the policy of interference in the various states' internal affairs and against the forces acting on behalf of progressive world development. We think religion should not and cannot interfere in politics. Any attempt to do so must be opposed because, intentionally or not, it becomes a tool in the hands of the reaction that way."

In view of these considerations it is necessary to firmly expose and eliminate any attempts to conduct antisocial activities or to violate the laws of the land and the socialist standards of coexistence under the guise of religious or pseudoreligious events.

GEORGETA FLOREA: No discussion of the role of scientific-materialist education in the formation of socialist awareness, as it has already been commented here, can dispense with critical analysis of the way it is still conducted at points or with determination of courses of action to improve the effort to promote the revolutionary conception of the world and life and to combat the mystical-religious practices.

Short of repeating previous comments, I am stressing the fact that examination of the subjects that are more frequently brought up in discussions indicates that the same problems are constantly discussed and rediscussed and that there is a certain inertia in devising the programs for this activity, which cannot maintain the interest of the interlocutors, does not offer new information each time, and does not meet any real requirements. In the treatment of some subjects the arguments brought up are often only apparently to the point and cannot be penetrating because the fact is ignored that there is no single religion nor any uniform way of referring it to science, politics, philosophy, morality, art etc. And then, if the confrontation is to be with a believer in a particular sect, he may reject the validity of the formulated opinion because it does not correspond to the position of the particular belief that he shares. Such a

treatment is also ineffectual for a potential propagandist, because it does not give him exact knowledge but abstract formulations with an extremely limited appeal.

In another connection, I think the way the scientific-materialist educational efforts are differentiated according to the nature of each social category is still unsatisfactory. For instance there are very few attempts to prepare and implement educational programs suitable for mothers, who play a considerable part in educating their own children. Similarly, since it is known that youths have a certain inclination, natural at their age, to discuss happiness, dignity, the purpose of life, etc., the discussions arranged for them should include those subjects to a greater extent, especially since the religious sects capitalize on those questions in a great many of their programs.

OCTAVIAN CHETAN: The awareness of some of our fellow citizens still harbors "some maladies of the past," as the party general secretary graphically called them, a number of backward and mystical ideas and attitudes about work, life, society and man. They are also fostered by the efforts toward moral and intellectual pollution exerted by some imperialist circles. There is unquestionably a spontaneous but very slow and difficult process of man's alienation from religion in the contemporary world. Despite some phenomena of recrudescence of some mystical beliefs and practices, caused primarily by the poselyting of some neo-Protestant sects, the general trend is clearly in the direction of intensified secularization of the modern world at the expense of the religious phenomenon.

A simple comparison of the social, moral, ideological and other positions of religion in the middle of the last century with the present ones reveals significant differences that cannot be overlooked. But the process is complex, and the sometimes surprising ability of religion to adjust to the new social-cultural conditions makes for unexpected complications. Therefore I have grave doubts about some authors' view that active and purposeful participation in building the new society is an adequate means of atheist education. I feel this attitude implies a minimizing of political-educational work. Some even advocate restricting critical discussions of subjects related to rejection of mystical ideas, on the ground that such discussions might arouse a favorable interest in religious ideas in some cases.

In this way silence about contemporary religious ideology is tacitly or expressly encouraged, in the hope of a "natural death" of religion, while the activism of the representatives of religion and the various Christian sects does not tolerate such naive, illusory hopes. It is clear to any attentive observer of the contemporary social-political, economic and cultural realities that the persistence of backward, mystical ideas in some people's current thought and practice is obstructing their full development in society and their active, responsible participation in the revolutionary process. To be sure scientific knowledge, technical and professional competence, and encouragement of mass participation in construction of the new society greatly contribute to formation and development of socialist awareness and to the conquest of backward, mystical ideas. But the action of those factors must be involved, detected and implemented via an intensive political-educational effort and promotion and development of an active, militant revolutionary spirit based upon a consistently revolutionary

conception of the world and life and historical and dialectical materialism. Therefore the process of forming and developing a scientific, atheistic and revolutionary conception of society, man, nature and the universe is not a spontaneous process. It is a purposefully pursued process and primarily an ideological one.

CONSTANTIN RADUCU: The requirement to base all political-ideological work in socialist education upon the national and universal values of science and progressive culture is always urgent, and especially when it comes to scientific-materialist and revolutionary-humanist education and the workers' active, responsible participation in all socioeconomic activity.

But I feel the general formulation of the field of scientific-materialist education lacks a necessary specification of its scope and a differentiation of the forms taken by religious belief, as it has also been indicated in the previous comments. Moreover I think the theoretical delimitation and explicit definition of the humanistic values Marxist atheism is promoting in the historical process of defeating man's religious alienation is a vital effort even today.

FLORIN GEORGESCU: It is an important feature of scientific-materialist and revolutionary-humanist education (as a component part of the party's political-ideological activity) that it is instituted in a humanistic program as an effort made so that man will opt for the values of humanism and contemporary scientific knowledge. This educational activity integrates the whole process of building the fully developed socialist society with its particular objectives. When people acquire a broad horizon of knowledge and they are armed with the CPR's revolutionary conception of the world and life and historical and dialectical materialism, prospects are opened up for purposeful action in the spirit of the objective laws and for advancement and development of the workers' new awareness.

The practical results of the socialist revolution and awareness have accordingly proved that the objective causes or social-human determinations that favored the appearance and functioning of religion are successively eliminated in the historical process of constructing a new life. Alongside improvement of material living conditions and of the new social relations, it has proved always necessary to make a sustained and militant educational effort in order to eradicate mystical ideas and the forms of man's religious alienation.

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CSO: 2700/182

HUNGARIAN WEEKLY CITES NEW ROMANIAN BIRTH RATE MEASURES

Budapest HETI VILAGGAZDASAG in Hungarian 24 Mar 84 pp 42-43

[Article by Gyorgy B. Walko: "Romanian Population Policy--Pretty Soon Three or Four"]

[Text] In spite of the abortion law enacted nearly two decades ago, the population peaks have decreased during the past 2 years. The 421,000 abortions performed last year in spite of the stringent restrictions forced the Romanian authorities to take a stand at the highest level.

In Romania, at the present time every other topic is relegated to the background by the population policy. The decrease in the birth rate was recently analyzed by the Policy Enforcement Committee of the Central Committee of the RCP and, in form of a resolution, it called on the population--and on the responsible authorities--"to insure a normal demographic increase." Ever since, the problem has been discussed almost daily by the press and radio. Serial interviews are prepared with happy parents who speak of the joys of raising children; right after their wedding, the reporter of the Bucharest TV inquires from newlyweds as to the number of children they would like.

At the recently held session of the Chief Council on Health, Nicolae Ceausescu, secretary general of the RCP and president of the country, stated unequivocally that he would find it necessary to raise 3-4 children per family and he stressed his lack of understanding toward families who, out of a "love of comfort" exclude themselves from raising children.

According to recently published data, there were a total of 421,386 officially permitted abortions performed last year while the number of live births was 321,498, that is, there were 1,311 abortions per 1,000 live births. The officially published data reveal that the birth rate of 14.3 per thousand in 1983--which is the ratio of total population to live births--fails to insure the demographic goals also defined by the guidelines of the 1979 Party Congress; that the population of Romania should reach 25 million by 1990.

It is also noteworthy that, in spite of the population policy measures, the birth rate was exactly the same in 1983 as before the enactment of the 1966 abortion law, that is, 14.3 per thousand. It is true that during the first 2

years after passage of the more restrictive abortion law, there was an explosive increase in the birth rate to 27.4 per thousand, but by 1972 it already dropped to 18.8 per thousand and, according to some of last year's data, in 1982 it was "the lowest rate in the history of the country." The data published on the large number of abortions are extremely noteworthy especially because the relevant regulations in Romania are indeed very stringent.

The State Council decree, introduced 1 November 1966 and in effect today, categorically stated already in the introduction that "abortion" is forbidden and that it can be permitted only in exceptional cases. According to the regulation, abortion can be permitted only by the Committee of Physicians on the basis of a complex reporting form. Even this can be done only if applied for by a woman over 45 years old; if one of the parents is seriously ill and the disorder makes it probable that the child to be born will have a genetic anomaly; if the life of the woman is endangered by the pregnancy; if the female applicant is raising four children; or if the pregnancy is the consequence of a criminal act with possible venereal disease. At the time, the criminal code was also modified simultaneously with the abortion decree. Since that time, those performing illegal abortions can be punished by up to 12 years in jail and if a physician is the guilty one, he will receive an additional suspension of his license for 2-10 years. With such stringent sanctions, the current data on the number of officially authorized abortions seems to be surprisingly high especially considering the list of indications for abortion. Nicolae Ceausescu already stated that, in his judgment, the number of abortions could be decreased by at least 30 percent, the more so because only about 9 percent of them can be medically justified.

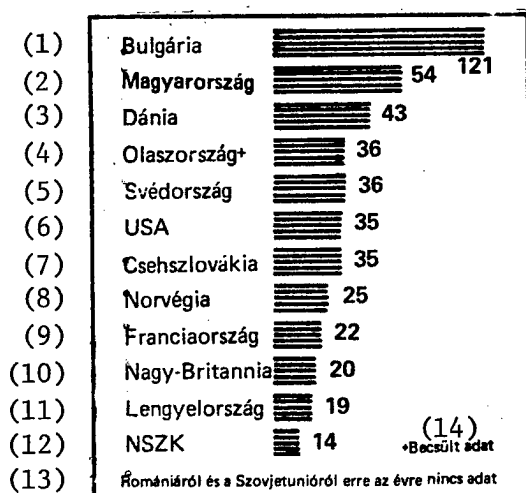
It is also revealed by the Romanian press that many abortions are performed by untrained individuals; moreover, the new decree also provides for the possibility of a 6 months to 2 years jail sentence for women who do abortions on themselves--it appears that such practices also exist. The illegal cases of abortion now published expose only the detected "angel makers" and there is not even an estimate of their true number, of course. As revealed by the press, illegal interventions can be punished mostly if the woman finally lands in the hospital because of the intervention or--another possibility--if she dies. The increase in the number of abortions is no doubt also directly influenced by the fact that contraceptive pills are not commercially available in Romania, and they can only be bought with difficulty and very expensively on the black market.

It is an indicator of the more stringent controls that, according to the current resolution by the highest board of the RCP, the Ministry of Interior will also have a role in controlling the implementation of the population policy. The resolution currently published does not go into detail about the more stringent controls but, at the session of the Chief Council on Health, "drastic" measures were projected against those violating the abortion law. Otherwise the party resolution does not mention any increase in the family allowance which was increased by 35 percent in 1982. At the time, allowance was paid for a total of 4,800,000 children depending on the income and salary category of the parents.

On that basis, within the lowest salary category of up to 1,850 leis, 295 leis are given after the first child, and additional 310 leis after the second child and 350 leis after the third child as family allowance, and these sums decrease as the income of the parents increases. Neither is there any reference to a possible change, that is, increase in the taxation of childlessness which must be paid by childless persons over 25 years old. This is mostly just a symbolic sum, 80 leis, at the lowest salary level but it can amount to a few hundred leis at higher salary levels. The current party resolution does not mention the factors indirectly influencing the demographic situation. In Romania, it is relatively easy to get housing although the rate of apartment construction has decreased: in 1982, 162,000 housing units were delivered compared to 135,400 last year. At the same time, an interesting and relevant datum shows that, after the establishment of 20,000 day nursery places during the 1970's, a total of 810 new places were established last year in Romania.

In spite of the fact that the demographic situation is considered serious in Romania, attention must also be called to the fact that the population increase was 65,000 last year and 104,000 in 1982. Thus, on 1 January of this year, the total number of the population was exactly 22,593,720. Nevertheless, the decrease in the birth rate--in which other factors defining the general standard of living of the population also clearly play a role--still appears significant in spite of the absolute population increase. At any rate, Nicolae Ceausescu asserted that raising children is also a patriotic duty and he voiced the opinion that the current demographic conditions represent merely a "passing phase" in the history of socialist Romania.

Number of Abortions as a Percent of Total Births (Source: UN Demographic Yearbook, 1981)



Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. Bulgaria | 5. Sweden |
| 2. Hungary | 6. USA |
| 3. Denmark | 7. Czechoslovakia |
| 4. Italy* | 8. Norway |

9. France
10. Great Britain
11. Poland
12. FRG

13. No data on Romania and the USSR are available for this year
14. *Estimated datum

Demographic Changes in Some European Countries in 1982

	<u>Live births</u> <u>(per 1000)</u>	<u>Natural increase</u> <u>(per 1000)</u>
Austria	12.5	0.5
Bulgaria	13.3	2.6
Czechoslovakia	15.2	3.5
Denmark	10.3	-0.5
Greece	14.3	5.6
Netherlands	12.0	3.8
Ireland	20.3	10.9
Yugoslavia	16.5	7.6
Poland	19.4	10.2
Hungary	12.5**	-1.0
GDR	14.4	0.7
FRG	10.1	-1.5
Norway	12.4	2.4
Romania	15.3*	5.4
Sweden	11.1	0.2
USSR	19.0	8.9

* In 1983, 14.3 per 1000

** Preliminary datum for 1983: 11.9 per 1000

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Demographic Yearbook 1982

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